

The Saturday Review

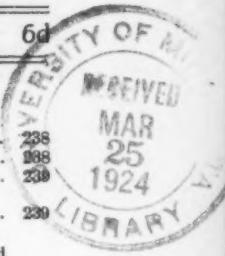
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Notes of the Week

MR. CHURCHILL'S tactics are his own affair as much as the nomination of candidates for the Abbey division of Westminster is the affair of the local political associations; but we cannot help thinking it a pity, since he is not prepared to declare himself openly as a Conservative, that Mr. Churchill should stand for the division as an Independent candidate with a merely benevolent eye on Conservatism. An eminent pacifist will oppose him in the Liberal interest, but he will also be in the position of having to fight Mr. Nicholson, the officially chosen Conservative candidate, as well as at least one Socialist candidate. As there is pretty certain to be a General Election within the next six months, Mr. Churchill would not have had long to wait, and his return to the true political faith would have become an accepted fact; but our own sympathies at the moment are with those who demand that a candidate who asks for Conservative votes should not be ashamed to call himself a Conservative. If pride, or the echo of some of his recent utterances in the last campaign, prevent Mr. Churchill from so declaring himself as yet, we think he might have waited before making what is in fact an attack on the unity of the Conservative vote in the Abbey by-election.

THE PREMIER TO FRANCE

It should not escape notice that in the way of "beastly cleverness," Mr. MacDonald's second letter to M. Poincaré leaves far behind any performance of Lord Curzon. In this most adroit composition Mr. MacDonald presses home almost every charge against France that has been made in connexion with her relations to Germany or this country. He is careful not to say that these charges are made by him or his Government; he puts them down to a "large section" of the British people or states that such and such a thing is "widely felt" in England, but none the less the charges are there just the same. The only fresh feature contained in the letter is the coupling, contrary to the Balfour Note, of the Allied debts, such as that of France to Britain, with reparations. This may or

may not be right, but it should not be forgotten that America, the chief creditor, declares it to be quite inadmissible.

WHERE THERE IS HOPE

In his reply M. Poincaré denies rather than confutes the charges made in Mr. MacDonald's letter, and his real response appears in his statements that France will evacuate the Ruhr on the day when Germany pays off her debts, and the occupation of the Rhineland terminate when the conditions laid down in the Treaty (according to his reading of it) have been fulfilled and the security of France guaranteed. It is plain enough that there is no change in M. Poincaré, and that, if this was all, there would be little prospect of much good coming out of the work of the Expert Committees. But fortunately it is not all. France remains under the severe economic pressure which is typified by the increasing weakness of the franc, and it is this that is changing the entire situation, M. Poincaré notwithstanding. It is this, too, that will give high value to the reports of the Committees, and does give some hope of a settlement.

"MONKEY TRICKS"

According to M. Rakovsky, the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires here, Soviet Russia now seeks a credit from England of £150 millions in goods and cash—especially cash; and no doubt wishes it may get it. A week earlier he had placed the figure at just double this sum, but even the smaller amount is preposterous, for there are not, and indeed cannot be, anything like adequate guarantees for it. Who trusts the Soviet? Even Mr. MacDonald has characterized its policy as "monkey tricks." The latest of these is seen in the New Baltic States, where it is not only trying to sow seeds of discord by playing off one little State against another, but is endeavouring to subvert the Governments of all these by conspiracies organized and fomented by its agents. Only the other day 150 of these agents were rounded up in Estonia and imprisoned—though Soviet Russia gave *de jure* recognition, implying friendly relations, to Estonia four years ago. We commend the interpretation placed by the Soviet on *de jure* recognition to Mr. MacDonald's attention.

GLOOMY INDUSTRIAL PROSPECTS

Only incorrigible apologists for the present Government can dismiss as pure coincidence the spread of industrial unrest since Socialism came to power. Ministers may be all for moderation, but the feeling is general among workers that somehow the Socialist Government will secure for them what they cannot extort by their own actions, or at least save them from the worst consequences of strikes. So it is, though of course grievances are not lacking, that we to-day have with us very serious trouble in the cotton trade, in coal mining and in the shipyards, with threats of strife in engineering and other trades. The matters definitely in dispute are not incapable of settlement, but there can be little hope of a continuing peace until the workers are disabused of the idea that the collapse of capitalistic industry, however terrible its immediate results, would be more or less welcomed by the Government as opening the way to Socialistic control of production.

DO IT NOW

The demand of the men in the shipyards for an increase of 10s. a week in wages has been prejudiced by the unofficial strike at Southampton. Whether the demand can be met when the way is cleared for negotiation is very doubtful. Ship-building has suffered severely of late from a great variety of causes. Until 1914, one-fifth of the workers were ordinarily engaged on the construction of war-ships, which has almost ceased to provide employment, and another fifth were at work on vessels for foreign owners, who to-day are building elsewhere. In certain classes of vessels the world is temporarily too rich for the cargoes available. It would seem, therefore, that the choice for the men is between modest wages, which mean low costs and an eventual increase of employment, and high nominal wages with a great deal of unemployment. The national interest demands that not only these facts but all the men can urge against them should be brought fully before the public as soon as possible. Impartial inquiry should be instituted before the parties to the dispute are committed irrevocably.

A SCORE FOR THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

For almost the first time since the new Constitution was set up in India the Government there has shown Parliamentary adroitness. It was a master-stroke of Sir Basil Blackett's to throw on the Assembly the responsibility of choice between drastic measures in regard to the salt tax and relief of the Provincial exchequers. The immediate effect has been division in Indian Nationalist ranks. Certain groups have managed to formulate opinions on the position created by Sir Basil Blackett, but the Swarajists proper have been struck dumb. They can hardly afford to take any but a very strong line in regard to the salt tax, yet they cannot afford to be accommodating about relief to the Provinces. Only some unfortunate sentences in Lord Olivier's recent speech, making it difficult for the Viceroy to certify the salt tax at any figure above 1 R. 8 a.—the official proposal is 2 Rs.—in the event of obstruction of the Budget, mar the success which the Government of India has secured for the moment.

OURSELVES AND THE UNITED STATES

The terms of the Liquor Treaty between the United States and this country, giving to the United States customs authorities the right of search in British ships within an hour's steaming of the American coast, may or may not prove to have been wisely defined. A great deal will depend on the spirit in which they are applied. What is certain is that probably no two countries in the world except Great Britain and America could have even risked such terms as this treaty embodies. They are really a proof of the nature of the relations be-

tween the two countries, which are far more intimate and far closer than people realize. For the very reason that we have so much in common with America, it is possible for us to state our differences and express our opinions with greater freedom than would be possible in the case of nations with whom politeness rather than frankness proclaims the measure of our friendship.

IMMATURE VOTERS

Lord Hugh Cecil was perfectly right when, in the debate on the Bill for extending the franchise to women of twenty-one, he said that people came to mental maturity much more slowly to-day than they did fifty years ago. That alone would be a sufficient reason for opposing this proposed extension of the franchise to a mass of people in the most emotional, least experienced, and least balanced stage of life. We would much rather see the age-limit both for men and women put forward to twenty-five—that is if the object of taking the vote is to find out people's considered opinion as to what is best for them. The spoon-fed generation of to-day who are accustomed to having everything done for them, thought for them, arranged for them, are in a very different state of mental development at the age of twenty-one than were the generation in which the individual had to work and think himself into citizenship.

IN THE AIR

Lord Thomson's speech in the House of Lords on Tuesday was less unsatisfactory than that of his subordinate, Mr. Leach, but it nevertheless had about it a tang of that sentimentality which is the weakness of so much of the international idealism of Labour. Lord Thomson, while himself fully in favour of the policy inaugurated by his predecessor, appeared anxious not to offend the susceptibilities of his weaker brethren. When the Secretary and the Under-Secretary for the same Department speak on the same subject in such different tones, it is difficult to gauge what precise point of compromise between the two attitudes represents the Government view. This uncertainty is not diminished by the "amazing circumstances" of which Lord Londonderry reminded their lordships, wherein the Prime Minister was forced to repudiate the utterances of his Home Secretary. In view of such uncertainty, Conservatives should press, on the forthcoming introduction of the Air Estimates, for a categorical statement of the immediate, and particularly the ultimate, intentions of the Government with regard to aerial defence.

THE LUNACY SCANDAL

A recent lawsuit, now pending appeal, brings home to the public the intolerable weakness of our system of dealing with suspected lunatics. It is monstrous that the opinions of two doctors should be enough to send a man to a fate in many ways worse than that of the convict. And it is grotesquely silly that almost the only chance a sane man so condemned should have of vindicating himself is through escape prolonged for a fortnight. Society requires not only that the sane should be spared incarceration, but that lunatics should be placed under restraint. Clearly those who are now the certifying authorities should neither be left with their present power nor exposed to damages so heavy in the event of error; their opinions should be regarded as merely establishing a *prima facie* case for the attention of other authorities.

SPAIN AND MOROCCO

Though the news is somewhat obscure, there seems to be little doubt that Spain has her hands full again with the warlike tribes of the Riff, under their chief Abd-el-Krim. Melilla has been attacked and the cruiser

Cataluna shelled, but the chief scene of the fighting is in the high plateau, south-west of Melilla, where two or three years ago Krim inflicted terrible losses on the Spanish Army. It will be recalled that the unfortunate conduct of the campaign last year was one of the chief causes that brought the Directory into existence and gave it power. The way in which the Directory deals with this fresh development will be the test of its success or failure. The pride of Spain is involved in Morocco, but she has solid grounds for retaining and strengthening her hold on that country in its vast mineral resources.

THE PASSING OF THE PADISHAH

On Monday, the Caliph Abdul Mejid was placed on the throne, heard the sentence of deposition passed on him by the Angora Assembly, and then was told to get off. Within an hour or two he and his heir were escorted out of the country. And so the curtain falls, in a somewhat theatrical fashion, on the once-great House of Othman which created Turkey and the Turkish Empire. As the Assembly has also decreed the abolition of the Caliphate, this passing of the Padishah marks a further stage in the Westernization of Turkey. It also connotes a wide breach of the Pan-Islam movement, which only two or three years ago had such a formidable appearance, especially in India. The question of the Caliphate is one in which Moslems alone are concerned; but it is hardly likely that we have seen the last of the Caliphs, for the Caliphate has been regarded for over a thousand years as an integral part of Islam, and a contest for the position might conceivably raise difficult problems for England in the Middle East.

AGRICULTURE AND CO-OPERATION

No difficulty was experienced by the Government in getting the vote passed for giving loans to agricultural co-operative societies. In theory, at least, the plan is good, so far as it goes, but the real trouble, as we have pointed out before, is that our farmers do not take kindly to co-operation, and we question whether many of them will be brought to a different mind by what the Government has done. In any case this matter covers a very small part of the difficult agricultural problem of this country which, in brief, is to keep the arable land in cultivation. Mr. Buxton said that the loans to the agricultural co-operatives did not represent the whole of the Government's agricultural policy. The sooner the rest of that policy is disclosed the better, for what so far has been revealed of it does mighty little to remedy the situation.

EMPIRE WIRELESS

Mr. Robert Donald's Committee must be commended for the exemplary promptitude with which it issued its Report on Empire Wireless, but the conclusion to which it has come is a little surprising, in view of the fact that Mr. Donald himself was strongly in favour previously of a different policy—the association of private companies with the enterprise. The Committee declares outright for State ownership and operation, through the Post Office, of all wireless stations in Great Britain for communication with all overseas Dominions except Canada, which already has a Marconi service. We cannot say that we are greatly enamoured of the Post Office, and we note with satisfaction that the Committee insists on an improved business organization of that Department, for certainly it is much needed. The Government may or may not act on the recommendations of the Committee; the Dominion Governments will doubtless be asked to express their opinion, and it seems that already South Africa disapproves.

THE BETTING TAX

We imagined no vain thing when we protested against the publication of the Betting Tax Report after all chance of legislative effect being given to it had vanished. The present Government has now rejected the idea of any tax on betting; but, as we knew would happen, the sourer elements in Liberalism and in Socialism are disposed to use the Report in an attack on betting. The *Manchester Guardian* assures us that the Report of those who investigated betting with a purely fiscal purpose will not be wasted: it will be utilized for a purpose never entertained by the investigators and the witnesses. Over this prospect we must decline to rejoice. Interference with personal liberty has already gone much too far in many respects, and the people need a long and complete rest from fantastic and fanatical efforts to coerce them into morality.

THE NEW CHIEF AGENT

We welcome the appointment of Mr. H. E. Blain, C.B.E., to the office of Chief Agent of the Conservative Party as showing a genuine appreciation by the Party leaders of the need for thorough reorganization of Conservative machinery on up-to-date business lines. Mr. Blain has no easy task, and he will find many obstacles in his path, not the least of which will very possibly be the outcome of obstinacy and obtuseness among a certain unimaginative section of his own party. In a leading article we point out the necessity for a new spirit among Conservatives and a wider and more idealistic policy, without which the finest organization in the world must labour in vain. Given these things we do not doubt that Mr. Blain will more than justify the choice of his new leaders.

A FLITTING

Amen Corner, whence the Oxford University Press has now moved to Warwick Square, never held, so far as we are aware, all the portents in Virgil's Hell, which Johnson ascribed to a printing-house. The Press has no call, like an American, to move on, just to show that it is getting on. But its immensely widened activities needed more elbow-room. It publishes in these days English for the grown man and the child, as well as learned matter for those children in finance, the dons. It removed, somewhat late, Peacock's reproach against Oxford for neglecting the text of Plato. At present, Jowett's version is, we believe, out of print. We hope the new house may give us that once more, and a standard Landor.

THE NORWAY YEAR BOOK

We have received from the Sverre Mortensen Publishing Company, Christiania, 'The Norway Year Book, 1924'—the first year of issue. Edited by Mr. S. C. Hammer, Christiania correspondent of *The Times*, it is written throughout in English, and is a very creditable production typographically and as regards the quality and quantity of the information it gives. It is a capital, up-to-date handbook on Norway, and is welcome, as such a thing was much needed. Nothing like this wealth of information has hitherto been accessible in a single volume in one of the great languages of the world. For much the larger part the work consists of articles by acknowledged authorities covering every aspect of the subject. Everyone interested in Norway ought to get this valuable book.

Next week's issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW will be a special Publishers' Spring Announcements Number.

CONSERVATIVE IDEALISM

THE appointment of Mr. H. E. Blain, C.B.E., to fill the post recently vacated by Sir Reginald Hall, comes as a reassuring sign that in the Conservative Party imagination and leadership are not entirely divorced from one another. As assistant managing-director of the Underground combination Mr. Blain has impressed the minds and played a part in the lives of millions who until this week were unaware of his existence; and if he brings to his new task the same imagination and resource, and the same pressure of penetrative propaganda as marked his old, he should work miracles in the progressive education of the popular mind in the meaning of Conservatism. There could be no finer example of the unconscious educative power of propaganda than that furnished by Mr. Blain's Underground activities. By a judicious blend of good humour, good taste and deserving audacity he has succeeded in creating a somewhat astonishing but entirely successful atmosphere of goodwill and acquiescence between his Company and the not over-indulged traveller. Of his new appointment, then, Conservatives will heartily approve. He has great gifts and he will doubtless exercise them with pertinacity and discrimination. But all the imagination and organizing genius in the world, essential as these qualities are to the effective prosecution of Conservative ideals in the country, will of themselves avail little unless they have behind them, acting as their dynamic force, such a programme of wide and genuine reform as will appeal to the fervour of divinely discontented youth. Conservatism needs a new spirit, something finer and fresher than the somewhat stagnant and unimaginative negatives of which it is at the present time too exclusively the exponent. "What we have we hold," is an unpromising battle-cry where-with to rally round its standards the teeming cohorts of aspiring democracy. Mr. Baldwin spoke no more than a patent truism when he remarked recently that Conservatism would be the better for some of the earnestness and high purpose which mark the activities of the Labour Party. Socialists have not, or should not have, any monopoly of political idealism; but no party can expect to win devotion from the masses for a policy of negation and frustration. It is useless to apply the shibboleths of the past to the crises of the present.

It is discouraging to reflect how far man's political action is behind his political thought. To-day there are men struggling to put into practice ideas which as theories are already obsolete. State Socialism is now as dead as mutton and as chilly, and it is probably not unjust to say that at least some of those in the Labour Party who give it lip-service no longer pay it homage in their hearts. Conservatism has here a great opportunity, not merely in the negative task of exposing the fallacies of Socialism, but in the positive task of offering in its place a real and effective programme of progressive reform. It can offer idealism tempered by actuality, as opposed to the sentimental and indiscriminate idealism of such as take no cognisance of the harsh realities of an imperfect world. It can offer a real brotherhood of service to the country founded, not on material gain and the appeal to class consciousness and class hatred, but on the ideal of co-operation and cultivated taste. Under the guise of fellowship, Labour aims only at the elevation of one class at the expense of another; Conservatism can and ought to aim at the elevation of all for the mutual good of each.

In the realm of practical politics how would this work out? At the moment we have but little space to pursue the inquiry, but we may indicate very briefly the application of theory to practice by examining some of the Parliamentary events of the week. First, aerial defence. Because Conservatives oppose, and will oppose without relenting, any suggestion of unsoundness or wavering on the question of aerial defence,

that does not mean that it disagrees with the principle of disarmament or has the ideal of universal peace any less truly at heart than Mr. Leach and his accomplices. But it certainly does mean that it has a sense of practical realities which the Labour members would appear to be without. Secondly, there is the question of education. The Government propose, not this year, but in the future, to spend more money on education. Conservatism is as strongly in favour of educating the people as any party, but it differs from others in that it understands the need for educating the people properly and thoroughly. So little real and productive education is given to the people on the present basis, that the money spent upon it may almost be said to be wasted. Increased wastage, where there is so little money to spare, can only be met with opposition. It is an easy cry for Labour to make in these circumstances that Conservatism is opposed to the education of the masses. It is not. It means in due course to educate them to a proper standard; it does not mean to waste money in a sentimental gesture at providing "education" which is only a mockery of the word. This, then, is what we mean by the phrase "idealism tempered by actuality."

A Pilgrim's Progress

London, March 6

EVEN to those whose days are passed in more or less strict attention to what are called "public affairs" there come, happily, moments in which they are reminded that the really important things that happen are not on platforms, or in Parliaments, or in offices, or on fields of war or sport, but in the minds of men. And even to those whose business it is to survey the tide of printed matter that runs through the year there come moments when, instead of mere printed matter, they see a real book; where in place of words they find a piece of living thought. These are the good moments; and the best way to show one's gratitude for them is to try to share them and pass them on to others. Among the really important events of the past week has been the appearance of Mr. C. E. Montague's latest and best book, "The Right Place" (Chatto & Windus, 7s. net), a volume of essays on out-of-door things and the enjoyments that people who both work and think can extract from the holiday spirit. The appearance of a new book by Mr. Montague is always an event of literary importance; but I feel inclined to assert that this one has more in common with humanity at large than any other of the author's books. In its determined sympathy with the unlikely, in its apparent ingenuity in finding reasons for tolerating what you feel to be personally almost intolerable to the author, it is a fine example of the art of retaining one's intellectual and spiritual youth. It is said of a certain soldier in the Great War (whose name will not be unfamiliar to Mr. Montague) that he dyed his hair and lied about his age, in order to be allowed to enlist. One feels that if it were necessary, if his own mental vigour were not more than a match for the virility of a younger generation, Mr. Montague would not hesitate to adopt an intellectual disguise in order to obtain an entrance into the ranks of the young writers of to-day —where in fact he has no business to be.

I would that some of these young writers, who talk so much and seem to understand so little about style, would study, were it only with a view to learning how to begin to write good English, the simplicity, the balance, the firmness, the sure and wellnigh faultless rhythm of these pages. The more elaborate is the thought, the simpler and barer is the structure and sequence of the sentences; the dizzier and more edge-like the path of imagination, the surer is the foot-work, the firmer and more exact is the tread of the words. The author's head may be in the clouds, but

his feet are planted on the hard ground of fact. There is no purple and no patchwork; when he does strike out his meaning rings like steel on ice. He says more exactly what he means than any living writer who means so much and urges thought so strenuously to the attainment and expression of his meaning. This is merely to say that he knows how to use his tools. It is the lesser part of his merit; because what he fashions with his tools is even a finer thing than the craftsmanship with which he fashions it.

* * *

The book is about places, and about the holiday spirit of man abroad in the world and looking about him. Railways, walks, mountains, country houses, city streets—these are among the themes about which Mr. Montague so agreeably and so acutely, and sometimes so profoundly, discourses. And I know no book which so well gives utterance to the zest in the sense of movement in travel which all sane and natural persons feel, as does this ingenious fabric of thoughts and moods. How different are the aspects of a railway journey as seen by the dull traveller, who only thinks of it as one field after another sliding past the window, and of the same journey made by another traveller, who sees the railway's progress as a great adventure and toil across physical hills, along valleys, through cuttings and round corners, in its continuing effort to reach its destination with the least amount of energy and material expended! The true richness and satisfaction of maps, quite apart from their practical value, is well understood by Mr. Montague; he knows, and can convey to you, something of the luxury of reading a map even from a fireside chair, and taking in imagination bold journeys across and between its contours. 'Along an English Road' and 'Across the Pennine' together furnish a most loving rosary of the physical charms of England from the point of view of the map-maker and the traveller with a sense of engineering and physical geography. The book is really a plea for simplicity and sincerity in seeing and being, a warning that if one is to get enjoyment from a place, one must view it with natural eyes, and bring to it no preconceptions as to how it ought to be enjoyed. "Give all your sails to the wind," says the author; "trust to your own native sense of the object before you; let it abound in its difference from anything that you have heard worshipful persons describe as appropriate feelings in some similar case." I advise the reader to listen to the passage that follows, as well as examine it, know it and understand it; in mood and in manner as well as substance it gives the key to the book:

A long-familiar country house or farm that you remember flushing to heart-warming reds in the horizontal light of the endless English summer evening, the longest and kindest in the world, or standing up out of low meadow mists in the primeval-seeming stillness of late afternoon in the grave October weather when fires in deep hearths begin to grow wonderful—this is not just one good-looking thing, but a long scale of things ascending from dreary plainness to the loveliness that makes your small heart ache with over-filling; and some state of oneself, not of anything else, is registered by the place where it seems to stand on the scale. It may be to you the occasion of some vision as trivial and poor as a bilious man's vision of food, or a vision all on fire with heart-rending beauty and truth, like the one a man gets of the life of his mother when she has just died.

* * *

Of course, it is not possible to "review" a book like this. All one can do is to tell people to get it and read it. It is one of the few privileges of the editor, earned by constant self-denial in passing on to others, in the interest of his readers, congenial literary tasks, that when certain books arrive he can throw all fairness to the winds and say "No, not this time. I, even to the disadvantage of my readers and the deprival of a far more gifted member of my staff, will reserve to myself the privilege of writing about this book." And the occasion on which the wise and unscrupulous editor will certainly exercise this privilege is when a new book by C. E. Montague appears.

FILSON YOUNG

SATURDAY DINNERS

XVII. AT CIRO'S

CIRO'S, no doubt, is taken very simply by most of those who frequent it, but to us it has always yielded, more than any other resort in London and in a more appropriate setting, that pleasure of the mind for which we visit frivolous places. It is a pleasure which may be had out of certain of the pictures of Watteau and certain of the poems of Rochester and Austin Dobson, and in actual life out of the contemplation, with sympathy and irony, of bright, brittle creatures making the little most of their "live-long minute," their "indefinite reprieve." Always it requires that the odd pathos should be felt only by the spectator, and that the people in the picture or poem or dance-room should be entirely unconscious of anything but the moment's pleasantly-trivial business; and since we British do not easily give ourselves up to such business, it is not often to be had by watching any crowd of British pleasure-seekers. But at dancing resorts there is help in the music and the patterned movement, binding the dancers down to their immediate affair, isolating them from all of life that does not move to music; and at Ciro's, of all dancing resorts, there is the background, with the subtle green of the walls, and with lighting that produces the effect of illumination through water by rays that have travelled far since they last brightened anything in the work-a-day world. The orchestra, excellent of its sort and now by change of fashion spared the task of what used to be true Jazz, begins to play; couples move languidly over the floor, against those green walls and under that lighting; and people, doubtless embodiments of refined commonplace, become symbols of everything that lives for the moment.

But to write like that is to anticipate the mood of after-dinner. One dines at Ciro's with a wider choice than most places of its sort can offer. A folio *carte*, with a sufficiently French drawing on its outside front cover, sets one choosing between eight or nine soups, about fifteen varieties of fish, close on twenty *entrées*. Such a card reveals much to the experienced diner, who can tell from it at a glance whether the establishment numbers many epicures among its patrons or not. Certain things are inevitably in it: the *restaurateur* has got to be born whose first idea for a soup will not be the good but too familiar *Petite Marmite*, and it would be a house almost unique in London that showed originality about vegetables. But the frequenters of Ciro's have a great deal for which to be grateful, and not much over which to raise an eyebrow, though it is a little surprising to find among the roasts so modest a bird as a pigeon. The roasting of pigeons is an endeavour to get out of material what is not in it, and continuance in it is, like second marriage in Johnson's definition, the triumph of hope over experience. Many things can be done with pigeons, and young pigeons are notably good in a pie for a homely dinner, but the results of roasting will be mediocre at best. The wise man, at Ciro's or elsewhere, will compensate himself for the passing of the days in which game is at its best by falling back on poultry, undeterred by the fact that a fowl or duck will cost him close on a guinea. For our part, the other evening we passed all birds by, as the diner may also do, for one of the butcher's meat *plats du jour*. Before that we had been served with good *consommé* and with very pleasant poached sole. Afterwards we had an iced sweet, on the theory that dinner should end with an ice, though had it been lunch we should have fallen to the temptation of *crepes Suzettes*, of which with more truth might be said what Charles Lamb said of apple dumplings, that he who likes them not cannot have a really pure mind. With this dinner we drank Roederer, champagne being almost necessary at any dinner-dance establishment. Service was on the whole very good, though the restriction of the duties of

Ganymede to a single waiter can hardly fail to cause occasional delays and to inspire imitation of that famous diner who at a formal banquet proposed the health of absent friends, "coupled with the name of the wine waiter."

Ciro's has to live up to a good deal. Linked as it is with establishments in Paris, at Deauville and at Monte Carlo, it is expected to import into London some of the atmosphere of those places. And, then, it is to be supposed it must try to meet the needs both of the wealthy and fastidious and the less wealthy of its frequenters, and on the whole not in vain. That the general mass of pleasure-seekers at any place known to this age should be distinguished in their frivolity is impossible. Amusements cost money, and did not Swift tell us that if we want to know what God thinks of money we have only to look at the people to whom He gives it? But at Ciro's it is always possible to see some pretty women and many well-dressed, and some men with an idea of how pleasure should be pursued. The great room, by its colour scheme and lighting, softens the contrast between such and the others, and with a little goodwill the spectator can get the illusion that he is watching the amusements of society in a period of comely decadence.

Ciro's, in fact, goes a good way towards setting a standard in the amusements to which it is devoted, and that, in a really enlightened State, would be recognized as necessary and beneficial work, to be countenanced, even smiled upon officially. Seeing that statesmen have been known to unbend there, may one not hope that Ciro's will some day inspire one of them with a policy of public education in amusement, with State aid and a system of social scholarships whereby the brightest of the young people at the many palaces of dancing might be enabled to graduate in Orange Street? Or must we rely on devoted voluntary efforts from above, a kind of dinner-dance Toynbee Hall in some democratic area?

A NEW WAY TO PLAY OLD TUNES

BY DYNELEY HUSSEY

Kate. Kingsway Theatre.

IT was inevitable that the great success of the 'Beggar's Opera' and the comparative success of 'Polly' should set the producers of entertainment, unimaginative tailors that they are, cutting new works from the old pattern of ballad opera. There were rumours that Mr. Frederick Austin had been commissioned to arrange the music for such a piece; and Mr. Davies has published a libretto. Moreover, the invention of the purveyors of commercial musical comedy has become so bankrupt of new tunes, that they have had to fall back upon making hotch-potch of serious music by popular composers. We are shown a Russian Empress playing vampire to the strains of Tchaikovsky, and a mockery is made of Schubert's melodies, his love-affair and his trousers. All circumstances conspired, then, to bring on to the stage the "fantastic ballad-opera"; if it had not been 'Kate' at the Kingsway, it would have been 'Sally' at the Strand.

The chief criticism made upon this piece is that its plot is stupid and unintelligible. But a similar defect did not affect the success of the 'Beggar's Opera,' nor does it detract from the brilliance of 'The Way of the World.' For in these the only thing of consequence is the situation of the moment. What does matter is that the anonymous author of 'Kate' has chosen a vague period, somewhere about 1800, for his setting and has filled the stage with a number of stock characters, who never utter a witty line from beginning to end. Unless this be wit:

Q. What's afoot to-day?

A. The same as yesterday—twelve inches.

Apart from this poverty in the dialogue, the author has made the mistake of drawing from the mirror held

up by previous artists, instead of from Nature herself. I may add, parenthetically, that the designer of the scenery and costumes has done the same thing by borrowing Lovat Fraser's quaint distorting glass. One, at least, of the attractions of the 'Beggar's Opera' in its own day was its satirical treatment of contemporary life; and, though much of the stinging quality has evaporated during the lapse of two centuries, sufficient of Gay's hints remain palpable, *mutatis mutandis*, in our own times. Besides, what the 'Beggar's Opera' lost in topicality, it gained in strange oaths and naughty words which, falling upon unaccustomed ears, would have made up for a plentiful lack of wit. 'Kate' is, in this respect, quite blameless and indulges in no more than a Victorian prudery about mild expletives. It is no fault of the actors at the Kingsway Theatre that not one of the persons is alive, at least during the dialogue; with all their enthusiasm and hard work they cannot infuse vitality into copy-book maxims, except when they are patched into an amusing song.

So the music's the thing, and by it 'Kate' will stand or fall. It deserves to stand; for the dialogue is mercifully brief and merely supplies the row of pegs on which to hang about three score of beautiful or jolly tunes. These are anthologized mainly from the wide fields of English folk-song and dance, with a few chanties and a little of Mr. Gerrard Williams's own composing added. If you complain that some of these tunes are as like as two buttercups, why, so they are; but a buttercup is not the less pretty for being like another buttercup. Mr. Williams has, on the whole, been wise in his choice of songs and discreet in his arrangement of them, though he has sometimes put a simple daisy into a too sophisticated pot. It is a pity that for Kate's first song he has chosen a very inferior version of the well-known ballad of 'Craigston's Growing.' This Codingham variant is commonplace when compared with that collected at Curry Rivel by Mr. Cecil Sharp and published in his first book of 'Folk-songs from Somerset,' under the title 'The Trees they do grow high.' To take a detail, the first note of the final bar has been lengthened by Mr. Williams (or by Miss Marjorie Gordon, who sings it), so that the beautiful and characteristic effect of syncopation resulting from a quaver on the beat followed by two tied crotchets is lost altogether. The lyrics for these songs have been "selected and adapted" by Mr. F. G. Weston, who has sometimes found or invented a very Gay refrain such as, 'There's money in thieving and profit in lies,' and sometimes contents himself with lines like "familiar features of our land." It will be perceived that one of the merits of the performance is clarity of diction; it was quite easy to follow the words of every song, even in the choruses—would it were so in the concert-halls, where, even with the printed words before one, it is sometimes impossible to be sure which song or in what language the vocalist is supposed to be singing!

In a piece like this the honours go to the best singers, and the chorus deserve the first mention. They appear to have been chosen rather for their intelligence and their voices than on account of the inanity of their looks or their similarity in shape and size. From Mr. Ranallow we are always sure of good singing, though his is the poorest part of all. Miss Marjorie Gordon and Miss Nellie Briercliffe, with pretty faces and pretty voices, fulfil all that is required of them; while Mr. Gregory Stroud, as Jack Manley, sings with a good light tenor voice and looks the part. Mr. Percy Parsons, as Sir Gregory Galhouse (pronounced Gallus), is an efficient villain, bass even to his voice; he has a wicked "Ha! Ha!" a terrifying "Tcha!" and a leg to dance a hornpipe. He is ably abetted in his plotting by Miss Sydney Fairbrother, who has sufficient comic genius to turn the poor material at her disposal into laughable fun. Her feat of equitation and, especially, her singing, in which she misses every note by a mile, are really amusing. She should be a God-send to some of our modern composers as an interpreter of their

quarter-tonal music. There is an excellent small orchestra, conducted by Mr. Anthony Bernard, who had got his forces to work well together by the end of last week. I cannot say that 'Kate' is a satisfactory piece of work, but there is sufficient good in it to make a visit to the Kingsway very worth while, if the object is to spend an evening pleasantly and without excitement.

THE RURAL SCENE

BY IVOR BROWN

The Dark Little People. By J. O. Francis. Given by the Repertory Players at the Aldwych Theatre, Feb. 23 and 24. *The Portmadoc Players.* Special matinée at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, Feb. 25.

The Arts League of Service Travelling Theatre. Spring Tour.

WHEN the arts are in for a wigging, it is always the drama that heads the bad boys' queue and feels the first fury of reforming zeal. By the time that the early victim has had his dose of punishment, there does not seem to be much energy remaining for further whipping or lecturing. The painter is left to solitary self-improvement in his studio; no well-meaning folk form little societies to coax or castigate the erring novelist; and it is only on rare occasions that the people who lecture on "the civic aspects of drama," remember that architecture is the most "civic" of all the arts, since there is no private building without a public view. "Civics," if I may use the word, make the drama their particular wash-pot. No harm in that. But the trouble is that they will mix their "civism" with a platterful of pessimism; in their spate of eloquence about communal self-expression, they are continually telling us how vapid and vulgar and generally debased we are. This is always disheartening; it is sometimes dishonest; and it is rarely free from a disastrous ignorance of theatrical history.

The reformers rail against our flashy, trashy, money-making West End plays, but they do not stop to realize that these are but a tithe of the flashy, trashy, money-making films and novels and pictures and melodies. Nobody in his senses can expect a universally high standard of art in a country where effective artistic demand is not limited (as it was in Athens in the fifth century B.C.) to a limited aristocracy of taste and tradition. The last stages of democracy may turn out to be the best for art, that is to say if we hopefully postulate a future in which the people have become a gigantic aristocracy of informed discretion. But in the meantime we have facts to face; the vast majority (a majority drawn from every social class) does not want art; it wants entertainment. And these two are by no means identical. Foolish and vulgar people want foolish and vulgar excitement and can usually make their demand effective.

If this seem grossly platitudinous, I must ask for pardon; but these statements, whether obvious or not, are the essential basis of a proper perspective for assessing dramatic values. I submit that the theatre, over which the pessimists pour out so many an oration, is in a healthier state than the lending-library, over which few tears are shed; that there is more intelligent drama visible now than there has been for a century or more; that there is more serious thought and enlightened taste going into the play-house than our fathers and grandfathers would have deemed possible; and, finally, that play-acting of an honourable kind is becoming a genuinely national exercise. Considering the democratic difficulties to which I have alluded, I suggest that there is more reason for serious pride in our theatre than for the usual moans and groans and doleful citing of foreign exemplars.

One particular phase of this comforting situation is the sudden surge of village drama. I do not think that I exaggerate if I say that there is ten times as much acting in the countryside as there was before the war. The village players have become a village institution. This activity has received much help from

external sources; it gets, for instance, all sorts of aid and advice from the British Drama League. But the creative impulse is internal. People want to act and they are acting. The Portmadoc Players appeared, by invitation of Mr. Nigel Playfair, at Hammersmith last week; a little that they did was excellent, judged on the highest professional standard. All of it was creditable. Far more important is the fact that this is but one of a network of similar companies spread over Wales, whose object is a kind of pyramidal structure of native drama with a National Theatre as its apex.

Londoners, as that brilliant provincial, the late Dixon Scott, used to remind them, see England fore-shortened. Inevitably we become so engrossed in Hampstead or Hammersmith or Shaftesbury Avenue, that we forget the rural scene altogether, just as we usually forget that agriculture is still Britain's largest industry. In the eye of eternity the high-vaulting ambition of our modern barn-stormers may be of far greater import than any change of theatrical fashion among the city professionals. It is the business of dramatic art to remember the widest commonality when it creates its joy. If the commons do the work for themselves, so much the better.

My criticism of the Portmadoc Players is they were not quite "Portmadocky" enough. Their second short piece, 'The Man Who was Born to be Hanged,' by Mr. Richard Hughes, might have passed as a ghoulish music-hall sketch, acceptable from Wick to West Ham. It was cleverish and conventional, where it might have been, with greater advantage, native and naïve. Again, 'The Cloud-break' was a dash at a modern miracle-play spoiled by an air of misty pretentiousness. But in 'The Poacher,' by Mr. J. O. Francis, there was a genuine feel of the shining night and of a world where a stolen rabbit means a solid Sunday dinner and is treasure indeed. Here was a perfectly simple story of the back-sliding godly man and it was perfectly effective. It was not novel, but it was natural and true throughout to the idiom, mental and lingual, of the players, who have one actor of rare and delicate feeling in Mr. Arthur Roberts.

Mr. J. O. Francis, who appears to be a distinguished leader of the Welsh national dramatic movement, had a special London performance given by the Repertory Players of a three-act play, 'The Dark Little People.' The piece was not dramatically water-tight; its action was a little thin and streaky, but it was vastly more interesting than the normal West-End piece. Its subject was race; its dramatic conflict lay in the half-buried but still potentially bitter animosity between the original Iberian stock (small and dark) and the Celtic conqueror (tall and fair). To inhabitants, of the cosmopolis that is London, which unlike most capitals has not a strong anti-Semitic movement to remind us that race is a reality in peace as well as in war, this conflagration in a Welsh valley may seem a blaze fanned from straw, but to me it was substantial fire. But I brought to the theatre an amateur interest in anthropology, which gave me, as it were, a few yards' start. The play was acted in a diversity of tongues. Mr. Fred O'Donovan acted finely in half-suppressed Irish on the side of "the small darks." Indeed, he looked perfectly the type, for Ireland too has its Iberians.

I was privileged to see another and delightful side of the rural scene, when the Travelling Theatre Company, organized by the Arts League of Service, gave a specimen of its spring-tour programme. This caravan company has been literally "on the road" since the end of the war, and has been made very welcome in the drama-starved villages and towns where it pitches its curtains. There ought to be not one of these motor-lorry companies, but a score—that is, if they could all keep the standards originally set.

The company has a programme of mingled folk-songs, dances, and short plays, *vaudeville de luxe* and yet a show for all. It doesn't lecture its audience uppishly or give them gloomy fore-bodings of the higher

thought, tempered by madrigals, Morris-dances, and "movementy" stuff; it carries no pseudo-Russian exoticism in its pack and its motto is not Bakst to the Land. It simply renews the achievements of the English people in song and mime and dance with the interpretation that these things are not lessons but delights. And that is how they are taken in the humble halls they visit. In short, the career of the Travelling Theatre is another argument for optimism.

Correspondence

M. BRIAND AND THE NEXT ELECTION

(FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT)

Paris, March 4, 1924

M. BRIAND does not puzzle French people any longer, because they have grown accustomed to being continually puzzled by him. Only psychologists and a few political writers interested in the human side of their subject still wonder what Aristide Briand really is. "He has the instincts of the anarchist," say the authors of that sparkling book, *Ceux qui nous mènent*, "and the instincts of the Conservative, and the two tendencies are so intermingled that they cannot be read apart and give to their possessor a mysterious physiognomy which he has known how to use as an asset." In fact, M. Briand, who was born in a more than humble place, "a haunt of brawling seamen" at Nantes, has refined tastes and always showed a gift for refined expression; he started in politics as a Socialist when the word Socialist was more frightening than even Bolshevik is to-day, but the moment he could sever himself from the party of Utopia and violence to adhere, as M. Millerand had done, to that of reasonable reforms, he was delighted to do so; he was in 1905 the champion of the Separation of Church and State, but while doing so he astonished everybody by the moderate spirit in which he was endeavouring to accomplish his objects, and those too were the days when he acquired his well-known partiality for clerical intercourse; the man who defended Hervé when he was regarded as the insulter of the army, is however a patriot and, in the crisis of 1913, showed himself strongly in favour of the Three Years' Service Law; at Cannes he seemed to be too much under the pro-German and pro-Russian influence of Mr. Lloyd George, yet it was he who had persuaded the English Prime Minister to countenance the occupation of Duisburg and Düsseldorf. Altogether M. Briand has all his life evinced an intellectual preference for advanced theories, checked the moment he is in office by an unconquerable desire not to be a dupe to mirages or words.

He has now been left to himself for two years, to the enjoyment of unbounded leisure, of long months at his farm, long weeks on a rich friend's yacht, long hours in his bed which he is said to love even more than power, and after a period of absolute silence it seems as if his primitive inclination towards so-called "republican" ideas were once more uppermost in his mind. It is a fact that, during the past six months, every time he has spoken it has been in what he still insists on describing as the "spirit of the Great Revolution." The men of the Great Revolution of course were pacifists after exactly the pattern of Lenin, that is to say, when they found no contradiction; but as M. Briand never reads and has the vaguest notions of what Sorel and even M. Aulard have taught us, when he speaks of the Revolution he means liberty, equality, fraternity, and probably a number of other respectable notions. But he very definitely means also that which will please the men in the Chamber or in the country who speak of themselves as being on the Left.

At Nantes, in January last, he said:

He felt sure that the fate of France in the world was indissolubly bound with her political conditions. If, in a great wave of enthusiasm, the French voters should at the next election return a Republican majority, really on the Left and truly Republican, all the calumnies now rise against France would soon be forgotten. People could no longer describe our country as a prey to the same militarist spirit which it has destroyed in Germany. Yes, let the spirit of the Revolution be revived, and all the poisonous gases floating between the world and ourselves will be blown away.

A few weeks later the same man who, ten years ago, started the great campaign for Proportional Representation by describing the constituencies as "stagnant little pools," caused not a little surprise by calmly declaring to the Chamber that he now was in favour of that same mode of voting he had so scathingly condemned, "because the best electoral system was the one most likely to return a Republican majority." Finally, three weeks ago, at Carcassonne, M. Briand definitely adhered to the coalition of the Radicals with the Socialists and even the Communists at the next election, that is to say, the formation of a *bloc* of parties on the Left as against the *Bloc national*. This, of course, is tantamount to an abandonment of the majority with which M. Briand governed during a year, and to a declaration of war on M. Poincaré. We must infer that M. Briand is convinced that the election will be in favour of the Radical-Socialist Party and he is anxious even now to throw in his lot with theirs.

Now, is he right or is his old political instinct at fault? Everybody is agreed that if the vote by constituencies, on local lines, were re-established, the National Bloc would be defeated. Perhaps M. Briand imagines that this is going to be the case. Perhaps he thought that the Senate which shows an overwhelming majority for a return to the old system must beat the Chamber which, on the contrary, is five to one in favour of Proportional Representation. But since M. Briand spoke, the Senate has evidently flagged. It always does so when it finds that the Chamber has the Government on its side or *vice versa*. A new committee appointed in the Higher Assembly to report on the question is far less Radical than its predecessor—all the members but one of which recently resigned—and if its report is in favour of Proportional Representation, as now seems to be probable, it is more than likely that the Senate will follow. If this happens the chances will be on the side of the *Bloc national* and M. Poincaré, or perhaps of M. Loucheur—who says nothing except what will make him appear as a politically detached business man—and M. Briand will be a losing gambler. In former days he would never have taken such a risk, but since his return from Cannes, as his last loss of office is politely styled, he has exhibited a nervousness which was not supposed to be in his nature.

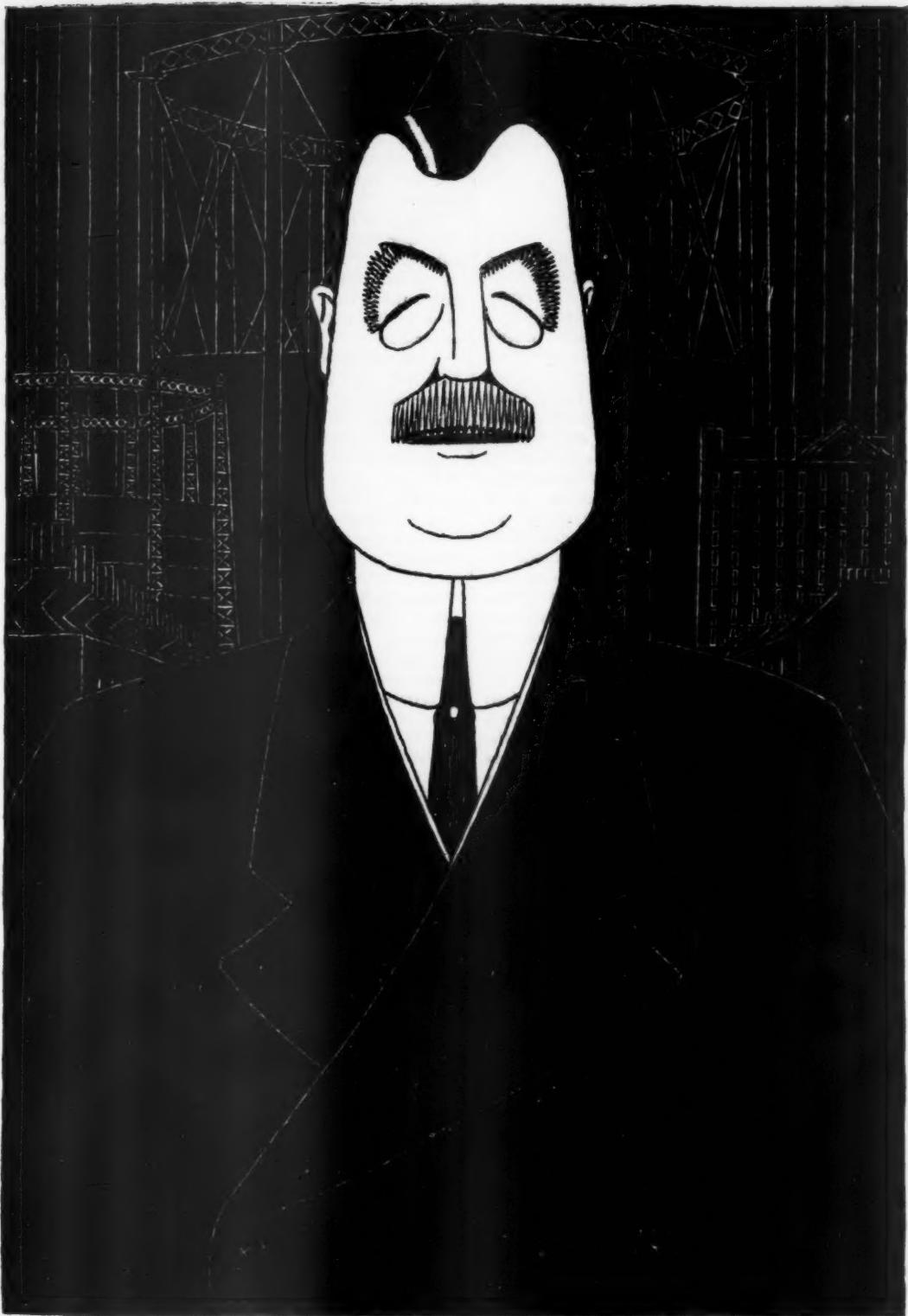
Verse

THE OUTCAST

LIKE a lean robber on life's bleak highway
Grown fierce with famine, haggard with hard cold,
I crouch amid the shadows and behold
Stream past in ordered glorious array
Deep laden caravans of hope and joy,
Guarded by many gods; then sudden leap,
And to my secret lair exultant creep,
Bearing some fragment from the long convoy.

Scant and short lived my plundered pleasures are,
Some strain of song borne by the mocking wind,
Some laughing lie that sets an hour agleam;
Yet once—I know not how, the gods were blind—
I gathered from the dust a fallen dream,
And decked my desert darkness with a star.

H. J. CLEUGH



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, No. 89

THE RT. HON. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.

HOME SECRETARY

By 'QUIZ'

Letters to the Editor

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

THE PATH TO SOCIAL PEACE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In the middle of the road we meet strikes—and then more strikes. All akin, effete, and affecting to be what they are not. Let us look at what they really are. In the beginning there is a "demand" that promptly draws a "refusal"—beautiful words both, bubbling over with the fine English spirit of compromise!

Following these formal preliminaries, both sides settle down in earnest to await the next move. This stage is known as static strategy. Now, as all great bodies move slowly, it follows that great bodies while at rest tend rather to remain at rest than to develop motion of any kind. So there is no next move. Well begun is half done. With the efflux of time, strike notices take effect. Immediately prices of commodities, particularly of those that are more essential to the poor than to the opulent, rise with incredible rapidity—they soar like seaplanes—while capital values, in which the indigent are uninterested, dive into the great deep of depression. All in obedience to the economic Law of Equilibrium—a bequest of the Manchester School to intelligent middlemen.

If the futility of a strike is amazing, it is less so than is the equable mood of the non-participating millions, who take it, like the fog, to be a characteristic of the country, and who leave it at that. And yet, some day (when perhaps it interferes with the English Cup) they may ponder, and ask if in our intensively industrialized era a strike, any strike, is other than an indirect and inexpiable form of larceny.

Meanwhile, static strategy reigns unchallenged. But as light and shade must alternate in human life, the pictorial journals do their little to relieve the gloom. They give us portraits of all the more eminent industrial organizers who are in London, or arriving in London, or leaving London. It is rather a pity that they are so much alike; or is it that they are unlike, and merely look alike through an over-eager effort to capture the rapt expression of benign wisdom, that finds its most noble representation in the *Aesopus* of Velasquez?

In the course of time there is grave talk of Government interference. 'Tis mere talk. The inherited and inalienable right of British citizens to work or to idle is basic; beyond a Government; but the talk acts in another way—it evolves indirect action. Someone issues invitations to a lunch. At that lunch there appears a psychologist, preferably with a title, who while talking about nothing in general refers *inter alia* to the unfortunate dispute. Going on, in an eloquent passage—on the best Victorian model—he offers tribute to the superlative abilities, the more than human energies, and the pure principles of the leaders on the other side. And that ends it. Suddenly a conference is called. Delegates return to the delights of London. Within locked doors the conference sits for forty-eight hours—how it is fed, or if it smokes, or if it sleeps, the world knoweth not. But at day-break—more psychology—even with the morning milk, it reaches a "dramatic settlement." And then we go on again.

I am, etc.,

A CONSERVATIVE EMPLOYER

Glasgow

WHAT IS THE USE OF A BATTLESHIP?

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I am much obliged to you for sending me a copy of your journal in which a correspondent wishes me to remove misgivings which remarks attributed to me have aroused.

The first remark attributed to me is that during the Russo-Japanese War the Russian battleships ran away from the Japanese torpedo boats. That was the correct policy in those days; it is the correct policy to-day. "Battleships at night must run away from torpedo boats."

The next remark attributed to me is that during the war our battleships ran away from a tiny German submarine. In the Dardanelles those that could certainly did run as fast as they could into Mudros Harbour, those that delayed in the precipitous flight were sent to the bottom of the ocean by the tiny German submarine.

Your correspondent considers that this statement of fact by me represents Britannia as "an agitated dame running away but protesting volubly that she is mistress of the sea." I wonder what the German submarine thought when he came to the surface and watched three or four battleships sinking, and saw the sterns of the others running away so fast that he could not catch them. Perhaps he thought that he was mistress of the sea.

From my window at Malta I saw our fine battle fleet running in and out of the harbour. How different it would be if we were at war with a Mediterranean Power possessing no battleships, but having a great many torpedo-carrying boats, aeroplanes, and submarines. Malta has no modern defence, that is, no aeroplanes, no submarines, only battleships. Your correspondent heads his article, 'What is the use of a Battleship?' I wonder.

I am, etc.,

PERCY SCOTT

COMMUNISM CAMOUFLAGED

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Under this heading you point out that though the Labour Party has officially repudiated Communism, it may easily count in its ranks "many dissemblers pledged to the doctrine of Moscow." May I point out that no dissembling is now necessary? Although the Communist Party is not yet affiliated to the Labour Party, individual Communists are now freely admitted as members, delegates and officials, a change in policy rightly hailed by the Communist Party organ as a great Communist triumph. No less than nine Communist candidates stood at the General Election, of whom six, including the egregious Saklatvala, were also official Labour Party candidates; the other three received the support of local labour organizations as well as of a number of orthodox Labour members.

The object of the Communist Party is to permeate the Trade Unions and the Labour Party exactly in the same way as has been done by the Independent Labour Party, a small body consisting mainly of "bourgeois intellectuals," yet which has successfully dominated the policy of Labour and almost coerced it into the adoption of Socialism. In the same way and by similar methods the Communist Party aims to coerce Labour into Communism; and there is no doubt it is making steady progress. As Mr. Bromley, the leader of the last unhappy railway strike declared at the Labour Party Conference: "Half my crowd are Communists."

I am, etc.,

REGINALD WILSON,
General Secretary

British Empire Union, Limited,
Strand, W.C.2.

SOME SOBER VIEWS ON DRINK

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR.—While I congratulate Mr. A. N. Bransome on his frank and undoubtedly sincere advocacy of Prohibition, I am unable to compliment him upon the accuracy of his statement in reply to your admirable article of February 16. His assertion that the sale of alcoholics is injurious to the general community is presumably based on the fact that a small and steadily decreasing minority of the British public foolishly over-indulge, but this is no argument for the penalization of the very much larger portion of the community who are innocent of the practice which all sensible people deprecate. It is amazing to read that, according to Mr. Bransome, drug taking has not increased in America during late years. I shall be most pleased to furnish him with overwhelming and unimpeachable evidence to the contrary, the publication of which would occupy too much space in your valuable pages.

Re the food value of beer and its alleged poisonous character, I would refer your correspondent to statements of eminent medical men and chemists who testify to the contrary. A few will suffice, although they are typical of a very large number available. " Taken in moderation, good wine, beer, and spirits are useful as diet, and in certain forms of illness valuable stimulants " (Sir John Bland-Sutton, the eminent surgeon). " I believe in Temperance, but I believe in a glass of beer " (Sir William Milligan, M.P., and medical man). " They knew from scientific investigation that beer, properly made, contained the largest amount of vitamines that were found in anything that we ate or drank " (Dr. A. C. Roper, Consulting Surgeon of the Devon and Exeter Hospital). " There is no evidence that vinous beverages used in moderation had any harmful effects. As a chemist I can never understand how alcohol could be productive of corrosive lesions unless used immoderately; it is entirely neutral in its properties " (Professor H. E. Armstrong, at Royal Society of Arts). There may be something in environment, but anyway I am a firm believer in the memorable utterance of the late Dr. Magee of this city on the question of Prohibition.

I am, etc.,

ERNEST A. DANBURY

Park Road, Peterborough

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR.—Mr. Bransome's letter in your issue dated February 23 declares that it is the right of the State to prohibit the drink trade because it is injurious to the community; but this is a mis-statement of the fact. The consumption of alcoholic beverages is in itself not an evil, but, on the contrary, many derive benefit from it. It is abused only by a very small and insignificant proportion.

Mr. Bransome is wrong when he alleges that the only effective solution is Prohibition. This method has been tried in Norway, America and Canada, and found wanting, for although it does interfere with the moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages, it does not prevent the dipsomaniac from obtaining some vile form of intoxicant. The better and more practical solution is that of public house improvement, as has been pointed out by other of your correspondents.

I am, etc.,
W. P. HAMMOND

Nunhead, S.E. 15

LOCAL OPTION AND PROHIBITION

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR.—Your readers will observe that, while Mr. Pace desires to compare the convictions at Carlisle with those for other boroughs to the disadvantage of

Carlisle, he continues to ignore the judgment of the compiler of these same statistics that they are useless for this purpose. It is an attitude which reveals the weakness of his case.

As to Sir Arthur Holbrook's attack on the scheme in the House of Commons, his statements were repudiated by another member who had also visited Carlisle; further, the Carlisle Management supplied a complete answer. Again, as I have shown in a reply to Mr. Curtis, there is testimony from Carlisle even as recently as the past few days which comes from an entirely impartial source. Comparing one statement with another, I certainly prefer the opinions of Carlisle residents, who have no personal interests to serve, to those of other people who devote a great deal of time to making false statements about what I regard as an admirable experiment in practical reform. And in the same way I prefer the opinion of the compiler of the licensing statistics as to the value of the statistical test to that of Mr. Pace.

Is not Mr. Pace mistaken? I do not think that I have contradicted myself in my references to the brewers. I quite see the brewer's point of view. He wants to make the maximum profit and he can do this by concentrating on the sale of alcoholic liquors—hence the tied house system. But that does not mean that he could not, if he wished, conduct his houses as places for other refreshments and still make a fair profit, as is done by the P.R.H.A. My point is that the brewer is free to do this, but will not. There is no occasion for encouragement—the way is open to him and always has been.

Mr. Pace knows perfectly well that under private ownership the redundant houses are maintained by the brewers because they attract custom and because they are available for reduction under the compensation fund. It is when, as at Carlisle, the houses can be closed without detriment to the convenience of the public that it is possible to put a stop to the practice of creating a demand by the excessive facilities.

Mr. Pace's habit of declaring that those who disagree with him are prohibitionists suggests that he has a bad case. I hope Mr. Pace will read the letter in a recent issue from A. E. Groves. The extract from the interview with Mr. Waters Butler seems to me to supply plenty of evidence from the inside in support of the statements made by those who have taken part in this correspondence in support of public ownership.

I am, etc.,

FRED CARTER

Abbey House, Westminster

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR.—Mr. A. E. Groves gives us the verbatim report of the opinion of a prominent member of the brewing trade, advocating State Purchase in 1919. It is rather obvious, between the lines, that there was at that time of high prices not a disinclination on the part of the writer to dispose of his interests to the State; if not, that report is a little extraordinary. It is also obvious that a person wishing to dispose of his property to the best advantage is, quite naturally, inclined to add some incentive or encouragement to a possible purchaser.

Further, the attitude of this brewer was somewhat inconsistent with his views; if he considered he was not acting rightly by allowing himself to be forced to push his business on the lines he did not believe in, his opinions seemingly did not bear sufficient weight with himself to do otherwise.

On the other hand, supposing, for instance, that a member of the medical profession, for some reason of his own, did not agree with the general practice of his profession, would that necessarily stigmatize accordingly all the members of that profession?

I am, etc.,

JOHN A. PACE

Temple, E.C.4

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The swelling anthology of licensing humour ought not to omit our Chelsea joke. I understand from people who dwell elsewhere that Chelsea is widely regarded as a quarter somewhat gay. It is but fair, therefore, to warn the stream of visitors about to flock to Wembley from Waipukurau, and Greater Britain generally, that at present not one restaurant in this borough of deliberate Bohemians is permitted to sell its own wines and beer. Perhaps one had better wait until Tuesday week, when, I believe, an application for such permission comes before our own licensing bench. If that application be opposed at all, from what motive can such opposition rise? Evidently from one unconnected with temperance, if it be true that a bottle of wine or beer at meal times is the most temperate of drinking ways.

I am, etc.,
ROBERT WILLIAMSON

66 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.3

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. Fred Carter quotes the Chief Constable of Carlisle, and an editorial in the *Carlisle Journal* in favour of the experiment that was forced upon the inhabitants of that area during the war and still maintained. These testimonials may or may not have been unsolicited, and he will pardon me if I prefer to accept my own views on State ownership, and these I may mention are not gained from partisan publications, but from personal experience.

The fact is, Mr. Carter admits that there were eighty-nine convictions in Carlisle last year for drunkenness and Messrs. Carter and Edwards hold this up as a bait to induce the Government to take over the whole of the trade in the country.

If these two gentlemen have no better evidence to offer in support of the extension of this piecemeal bit of Socialism, all one can say is that they are doomed to failure.

I am, etc.,
S. B. CURTIS

5 Cressingham Road, S.E. 13

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. Anderson apparently takes the line, not unusual among defenders of the liquor trade, that the owners of public-houses ought to do as they like without reference to the magistrates. So far as I can see, neither Mr. Edwards, whom I have not the pleasure of knowing, nor I, have contributed anything in support of Mr. Anderson's contentions, though I suppose he will concur in my view that naturally improvements must be subject to magisterial approval. Why should owners of licensed property think it a hardship that their plans should be submitted? What are they afraid of?

As to a public demand for a reform, there is a steadily growing conviction that so far as the liquor trade is concerned it should not be subjected to "private competitive enterprise." I don't desire to see public ownership extended to other trades. The liquor trade is an exceptional business altogether.

I am, etc.,
F. LUKE

Cranbourn Street, W.C.2

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Why all this keen agitation just now for State trading in Liquor? It is a very un-British idea, and only came into being as a war measure for war time. Do not business people suffer heavy taxation and other inconveniences enough through the State's unbusiness-like methods? Why put the liquor trade into the Government's already over-full hands? A queer solution this, which would create a Ministry of Liquor in

Whitehall and a long list of salaries all over the country. One would think the present financial condition of the country prohibits such wild cat schemes and speculative activities.

And, when the State found its liquor books would not balance, it would widen its horizon and control other business and so squeeze the small man out and leave the poor taxpayer to foot the bills. A merry world, gentlemen.

I am, etc.,
H. W. THOMAS

Westgate, Sudbury

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Several of your correspondents call the licensed trade a monopoly. But as we constantly hear that there are too many public houses for the needs of the consumer, monopoly seems to be a misnomer.

If there be a monopoly it has been largely created by the so-called Temperance Party who have consistently opposed applications for new licenses which would compete with the existing ones.

I am, etc.,
J. E. H. BARWELL

Playgoers Club, W.C.2

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The correspondence on these questions going on for some time past has been very interesting. Some of the advocates of restrictions, however, apparently think that arguments from the particular to the general meet their case; such arguments prove nothing.

On the other hand Mr. Fred Carter so insistently labours what little improvements can be picked out at Carlisle and magnifies them beyond measure. He seems to forget that even greater improvements and less drunkenness are evident in other areas, e.g., Hythe—not a single case of arrest for drunkenness among the residents. With all the advantages claimed for Carlisle, can it equal that?

I am, etc.,
J. GILBERT

[This correspondence is closed.—ED. S.R.]

THE HOLMENKOLLEN SKI MEETING

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The results of the Holmenkollen Ski Meeting in Norway reached me at the same moment as your issue of January 26, which contained a letter signed "Tournebroche," concerning that event. Might I crave a few lines of your space, if it is not too late, to point out a few facts that are palpably overlooked by that gentleman?

First, it is extremely doubtful whether the Swiss Ski Union would ever dream of entertaining the notion that a Swiss ski team should be sent to any foreign meeting with the help of a foreign subscription. The Council of the Swiss Ski Union are commercial and professional men of some standing who possess some considerable national pride in these matters.

Secondly, the Swiss Olympic Committee recently sent some forty representatives of their country to compete in the Olympic Games at Chamonix. With the exception of the military ski team, which took first prize in the event for which it was entered, the Swiss ski-runners did not do over well; they obtained the eighth place in jumping and tenth in the 12-mile race and jump combined. These men were not properly trained and were defeated easily by the Norwegians. Nothing will now induce the Swiss to go to Holmenkollen until they have revised their methods of training, if not of selecting international representatives.

Lastly, "Tournebroche" overlooks the fact that most men require to be under 30 years of age in this

type of contest. Of the runners mentioned by him, moreover, Capiti is dead; the remainder, except one of the Klopfensteins, never reached championship class.

But one might well ask why "Tournebroche" does not consider the raising of a British ski team to compete in such international contests? A British team was, in fact, entered for the 12-mile race, but was scratched at the last moment. The incident provoked no little surprise and disappointment among English visitors at Chamonix. If young American ski-runners were able to compete with considerable credit to themselves in the ski-ing events, why not British runners too? Great Britain finished third in the Olympic Games without a single representative in the ski-ing events. There is no need for a repetition of such a state of affairs; let "Tournebroche" remember that "charity begins at home."

I am, etc.,

H. DE WATTBIRHE,
Lieut.-Colonel
(Ski Club of Great Britain)

Klosters, Switzerland

'SO THIS IS FAIRYLAND'

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—On February 23, the dust-laden covers of Congreve's comedies were once more disturbed, and Mr. Ivor Brown gave us a destructive homily on one of "the sportive plays of the Restoration" in the SATURDAY REVIEW. Delightfully exuberant with Pistolic bombast and truculently ignorant of the comedy of manners, the shade of Jeremy Collier arose, speaking with the complacent indignation of Mr. William Archer, and dismally echoing the blast of Macaulay's tuneless trumpet. "Poor Charles Lamb" is again dragged before the rude stare of the public eye, and, as usual, is dismissed with a summary gesture of spontaneous pity as a witless fool, the fact being overlooked that Elia, handicapped with that rare attribute, a fanciful imagination, recorded the shrewd observations of an observant man of the world. But "of course" Macaulay, who never studied anything but the works of the ancient orators, the humours of Brougham and his own aggrandizement, is right, and Lamb, Hazlitt and a host of others, who have made an exhaustive study of Elizabethan and Restoration drama, are wrong. Such is the perversity of the human mind, and such is the opinion of Mr. Ivor Brown.

Mr. Brown is not, however, Puritanical like the clerical Collier, nor grundyistically Victorian like Mr. Archer; he is content with a prim pursing of the lips, then, shrugging his shoulders, he scowls at the 'Way of the World' from the shelter of Macaulay's flamboyant coat-tails, and inconsistently declares that he prefers Wycherley to Congreve. By the same rule, he probably prefers Smollett to Sterne and the cheap French novel to 'Tom Jones.' Broad vulgarity is less contaminating to the susceptible imagination than subtle innuendo. Yet this is not the reason that Congreve revolts the queasy stomach more violently than Wycherley! Mr. Brown has lighted upon an ancient fallacy, and has evolved a plausible aberration.

The difference in moral effect is due to the fact that Congreve was a dramatist, while Wycherley was a mere Juvenalian satirist. Maskwell and Mrs. Marwood lived on the stage; Horner and Lady Fidget were capering puppets. Wycherley has more in common with Swift and Dryden, and it is egregiously futile to compare him with Congreve or Molière. Congreve was a dramatist, but a dramatist of the comedy of manners; he was a follower of no precursor, he set up as the model of no school. He stood alone, a type of his own, without disciple or compeer. He was not imaginative, his plots were without action and therefore he had no plot, he was merely a showman, displaying exquisite etchings in a gallery of actual manners. To enter the kingdom of Congreve is to enter an elaborately furnished and richly adorned court of

elegant artificiality. It is futile to hope to enjoy the atmosphere of that court or to be entertained by its denizens, if it is entered with a feeling of romance or a single sentiment of profundity. It is an Utopian Eden where Coriolanus could fraternize with Falstaff, and Amelia Booth discuss the matrimonial affairs of Desdemona with Lady Teazle. That is what Lamb meant when he referred to the plays of the Restoration as "a world of themselves almost as much as fairyland."

The *raconteurs* of the stories in the Decameron harmlessly beguiled their time in telling stories and bandying witticisms, while the outside world was being ravaged by a deathly pestilence; they designed to divert themselves, completely oblivious to the dreary sordidness of the world without. The characters of Congreve's comedy are of the same humour as Boccaccio's elegant assembly. They are examples of humanity striving to be civilized. They wear a mask over the human face, they endeavour to screen the passions of the soul from the vulgar gaze, they become machines of wit and substitute for passion a periuke. The pathos of Congreve is when he forsakes artificiality and mannerism and attempts passionate enthusiasm and profound realism. To enjoy Congreve, one must sit down to an orgy of superficial wit, forget that there are such material attributes to a life as food and drink, moral philosophy and divorce, and adopt the credulous innocence of Lamb or the critical impartiality of Hazlitt, deaf to the blatant bark of Macaulay and the eloquent sneer of Meredith.

I am, etc.,

Radcliffe-on-Trent

MALCOLM ELWIN

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. MacGroth quite fairly challenged my right to head my article on the Restoration Comedies with this phrase. I admit the verbal distortion of Lamb's sentence, but I claim that neither article nor title effected a distortion of Lamb's general meaning. It is possible, of course, that Lamb never meant his view of the Restoration drama to be taken too seriously. He may have been flying a fanciful kite in this delightful essay in which his gift of phrasing is revealed in its most exquisite and delicate richness. If Lamb was merely amusing himself with a playful theory, plainly my criticism of the theory falls to the ground.

But if Lamb is to be taken seriously, he can only mean that the Restoration dramatists were working upon pure fantasy instead of upon an actual, visible, everyday world. He does not, it is true, call this world "fairyland." But he speaks of it as though it was Utopian, Atlantidean, such stuff as dreams are made of, a world beyond good and evil. To have called this "fairyland" is surely no distortion of the essay's purport, since the word fully maintains the contrast with actuality.

I am, etc.,

IVOR BROWN

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—With no inconsiderable difficulty and pains the text of Congreve has recently been cleared of alterations, "amendments," interpolations, corruptions and inept changes of every conceivable kind, and, for the first time, reprinted from the original editions. The word "filthy" in Millamant's reply to Mrs. Fainall—"He? Ay, and filthy verses—so I am" ('The Way of the World,' Act iv, Scene i) is not merely *not* a misprint, but it is the only possible word in that passage. It is as inevitable, as sure, and as full of meaning as "dwindle" in the delicious speech, "I may by degrees dwindle into a wife." To attempt to replace it by "silly" would destroy the whole rhythm and flavour of the phrase.

To suggest that "filthy verses" might be "at any rate changed in the acting version" is an irreverence

which makes my blood run cold. Surely by now it must be recognized that the "acting version" is the first quarto and the first quarto alone.

I am, etc.,
Strand, W.C.

MONTAGUE SUMMERS

THE CASE FOR VIENNESE OPERA

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I do hope you will not allow interest in the action of the Musicians' Union and B.N.O.C. to drop. Your remarks in the SATURDAY REVIEW are the only ones I have seen which show any real understanding of the position. The Ministry of Labour, backed by the Musicians' Union, exercises the most despotic tyranny over music and this is all artfully disguised as patriotism.

I had a painful experience of this all last summer. I had been for three years past in Prague, working in the Passport Office, and while there had befriended a young violinist, a Jugo-Slav, who needed help for his further studies. He gave concerts in the Smetana Hall, and many others in different parts of Czechoslovakia, with great success. In June last I brought him to London and he gave a concert in the Aeolian Hall (Vlado) under Mr. Robinson's direction. Mr. Robinson told me that he sold more tickets for this than for any other recital of the season.

The difficulties began on landing. We could only get a permit for this one appearance. I spent the next three months in running about from the Home Office to the Ministry of Labour, trying to get permission for him to remain in England and to pay back something of what had been spent on him. The Ministry of Labour, backed by the Musicians' Union (mostly gasfitters and mechanics, anything else than violinists) blocked everything. They would not allow him to play at Eastbourne in concerts, nor to play for Lyons at the Trocadero, nor, in fact, to earn anything. And the boy was hounded about like a pickpocket.

I got him off to Canada in the end and he is now in New York, where a lady has promised him maintenance for two years' further study with Auer and financial aid for his first appearances at Carnegie Hall. Casals thinks very highly of him and his playing, so I am really grateful to that disgusting Musicians' Union, as it has carried him out of these horrible conditions. But the position is horrible for music in England. I won't say English music, because that must fight its way like any other art, but if we are only to hear what is allowed us by the Musicians' Union, then English and all other music will die of dullness and inanition. It would be quite right if the "English singers" were boycotted if they go to sing again in Prague, or attempt to give any music there.

Have the Ministry of Labour the legal right to treat aliens in this way? I never got a satisfactory answer to this question, but the whole thing ought to be gone into very carefully. There is a great deal of feeling about it at the Czech Legation. The Musicians' Union report on everything; they had pamphlets sent round at a concert asking whether people knew that these Czechs were enemy aliens.

They have taken advantage of the post-war conditions to entrench themselves in this position and the Ministry of Labour, which seemed to be manned by the most ignorant crew I have ever met, is entirely directed by the Musicians' Union in this matter. They have one unanswerable formula, "Could an Englishman play this?" One could laugh if it were not so tragic.

Please forgive this long letter, but I will not rest until someone takes up the fight. It is worth it because it means music in England. Do let us have a chance of judging for ourselves and we shall better "appreciate" English music.

I am, etc.,
Wyck Hill, Stow-on-the-Wold ROSA C. BURLEY

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I am glad to see that the SATURDAY REVIEW, with its usual courage, has ventured to speak the truth about the intrigue which prevented the visit to Covent Garden of the Vienna Opera Company. Nothing more melancholy than the moral cowardice shown by distinguished public musicians in either acquiescing in, or maintaining silence about, this piece of trades-union bullying has happened in the musical world for a long time.

The honest but foolish people who imagined that they were furthering the interests of British music by joining in this agitation made two great mistakes. First, the Vienna Opera Company in no way competes with the British "National" Opera Company. The Vienna company is national and the British company is not. The British company is a private enterprise of some very courageous and enthusiastic artists, and deserves both support and success. The Vienna company is a national organization, the result of years of experience, and supported by the artistic resources of a whole country. At Covent Garden it would have given us a taste of the old Grand Opera, a social as well as a musical function, which London has not seen for many years, and which the B.N.O.C. expressly, and very wisely, disclaims any pretensions to giving.

I am, etc.,
London A BRITISH COMPOSER

Saturday Stories: XXV

THE BAKER'S CART

By GERALD BULLETT

FATHER was again in disgrace. Mother was once more beet-red with indignation. "My dear!" cried he in bewilderment. . . . but even that was turned against him. If only he'd *dear* less and *do* more! Mother was as skilful in debate as in housekeeping: waste was abhorrent to her, whether of words or of halfpennies. Her habit in controversy was to stab out with one phrase, and then remain silent for a period of days. Father, divining that such a period was about to begin, lost no time in venting his anger, not upon the cause of it, but upon nine-year-old Harriet bending in terror over her porridge, upon the green Venetian blinds, the wallpaper, the *Pears' Annual* pictures, and all the appurtenances of the breakfast room in which they sat, husband, wife, and youngest daughter. He declared that the wallpaper was poisonous, that the pictures were hung crooked, and that the architect who planned French windows to open on a backyard littered with drains was an imbecile.

"Take your hair out of your plate, Harriet," he said, in parenthesis.

The ghost of a smile played and passed over the face of mother, a smile which Harriet interpreted as full and free forgiveness of father's reference to the wallpaper of her choice, and to the pictures her hands had hung. For mother was always thinking of others, self-abnegation being the most conspicuous of her virtues. Harriet expected her every moment to say to the culprit, as she had so often said to her children: "It is not of me you must ask pardon, but of Him above."

At the moment father seemed disinclined to ask pardon of anyone. He continued his indictment of Number 27, Coniston Villas, and extended its application until the whole universe appeared clouded with his displeasure. He inquired, with some bitterness, why Alice and Maud were not at breakfast. Incredible blunder; for Alice and Maud, those hard-worked elder sisters of Harriet, had broken their fast and hurried away to their dingy city offices fully fifteen minutes before he, their erring father, had emerged from his so-called workroom. It was not often they had a Saturday off, oh no! Mother could not forbear to break her strategic silence with this information.

The storm of father's angry eloquence rose and fell and rose again, until, presently, he seemed to gulp it back. He pushed away his plate with such violence

that the bacon fat he had left upon it became a turbulent sea, whose waves washed forward to the table-cloth and backward to the pushing fingers. Whereat he muttered an unknown word, wiped the offended finger on his napkin, and loped out of the room like an awkward schoolboy.

Mother heaved a deep sigh. She rose from the table with infinite dignity and, from the greater height, shot one keen, wistful glance at her daughter's bowed head. Harriet, though she kept her eyes averted, was conscious of that glance, which she knew to be a sign that mother's cross was almost more than she could bear, and that mother's little girl must comfort mother by being very good and sweet and helpful, particularly in respect of the dirty breakfast things. But Harriet chose to ignore the appeal. She allowed mother unaided to pile up the plates and gather together the knives and forks; and when, a few minutes later, mother returned from the kitchen with a tray, Harriet was lying on her back under the table. The defection cost her a pang. She knew that, given the opportunity, mother would pet and praise her, and say what a blessing she was. It was very nice to be a blessing; and mother was so dear and adorable, with her lovely olive skin and her eyes of tenderness, that she could not be resisted. Harriet, on the few occasions that she had tried to resist, had always finally surrendered with tears and contrite kisses: it was as though mother, by the very abundance of her love, levied tribute on this miraculous child of her middle-age. What could Harriet do but love the mother to whom she owed so much, the mother who fed and clothed her, played with her, told her stories, and slaved, for her sake and her sisters', to keep the home together? "We'll have no secrets from each other, will we, Babs dear! I want to know everything, *everything*, that goes on in that funny little brown head of yours." Mother loved her voraciously, and wished not to share her, even with Alice and Maud, still less with father, whose mysterious wickedness it was—violent temper, lack of ambition, love of idle hobbies and unproductive dreaming—that threatened the home with disruption. Harriet feared her father almost as much as she loved her mother. She hated him sometimes, on her mother's behalf, for his unkindness. Yet even in the love she owed, and diligently paid, to her mother, there was a lurking and unrecognized fear. Something deep within her shrank from the ultimate surrender, something struggled against being absorbed into that other and so powerful personality. In spite of the maternal edict, Harriet did withhold secrets: trivial, childish things, thoughts and hopes of less than gossamer substance; yet they were precious to her, the more so because they were intimately, inviolably, her very own. "You're such a nice baby, I could gobble you up," cried mother in her raptures; "all your youth and freshness. They make *me* a child again, you little mousie!" And though it was great fun to be gobbled up with kisses, Harriet contrived to withhold her innermost treasure from the insatiable heart that laid siege to it.

Under the table she lay at peace, fancying herself a princess, the four table-legs the posts of a great, royal bed, and the underside of the table the dim purple canopy. Then she began playing the most secret and delicious of all her games, which she called Going Inside. Inside was her peculiar paradise. It was tingling, glowing, a riot of lovely colours in perpetual motion. It was a little wood where squirrels sat nibbling nuts on the green banks of a stream that trickled, with jewel clarity, over a pebbly bed; a region where, beyond time and space, the eternal fairy tales mingled in spontaneous fantasy. It was fragrant to the nostrils, comforting to the palate, a refuge for the mind. It smelt of honeysuckle and pines and moist earth; it tasted like a precious stone. And mother had never been there.

From this country of the mind, after a few moments, Harriet was dragged back, abruptly, to a consideration

of her father and his misdeeds; and as she pondered the mystery an adventurous impulse moved in her. Father was now, she guessed, in that little shed at the bottom of the garden which he called, to mother's disgust, his workroom: the place where, in idle moments, he carved and chipped and carpentered to his heart's content. She did not love father, because he did not deserve to be loved; but to-day the mystery of his personality excited her a little. She resolved, with a sudden intake of the breath, to visit the baffling creature in its own iniquitous den.

II

Father was at work with a long, flexible saw. He was red in the face, and emitting little grunts of exertion. Sometimes the saw, having reached the end of its outgoing journey, refused to be pulled back, and then the tapering end seemed like a ripple of steel-grey water. Father paused, mopped his brow, and flung a surprised glance at Harriet, who stood shyly in the doorway.

"Well, and what are you after?" His tone was uninviting.

Harriet hung her head. "I don't know."

"Did your mother send you with a message?"

"No," said Harriet. "I just wanted to see . . . Oh, father, what a lovely workhouse you've got!"

Father permitted himself to grin. "You've seen it often enough before, haven't you?"

"I haven't *really*, you know," explained Harriet. "I've just sort of looked a tiny peep; that's all."

"You're sure your mother didn't send you?" said father, suspicion reappearing in his eye.

"Trufa-nonna!" declared Harriet, earnestly. "I just thought I'd look you up, don't you see."

Father laughed. "You're a rum child. Want to see what's going on, eh?"

Harriet nodded. "What are you making, father?"

"Making nothing at present. Sawing up planks for use later on. But I made something this morning. Like to see it?"

"Yes, please," answered Harriet, dissembling her delight.

"But it's a secret, mind!"

It didn't seem to matter, after all, that she did not love father. This warm comfortable feeling inside her was so much better than love. Here was father, that bad man, about to tell her a secret. That was a thing that mother had never done. Mother extracted confidences, but never gave them. This was different, this new experience, and much more exciting. Father, knowing nothing of commerce, was unbosoming himself without demanding anything. Harriet was enchanted by his curtness, his casualness, his man-to-man air.

"It's a little thing I've invented," said father, with engaging vanity. "A mangle, you see. You clamp it down to the kitchen table with these two screws; and this roller travels over the board and back again, squeezing the clothes dry. See? All you have to do is to turn this handle."

"Oo!" cried Harriet. And she added, with her most ladylike and adult air: "Did you make it all this morning, every teeny bit of it?"

"Well, no," admitted the inventor. "Not exactly all. I had the roller done yesterday, and the board partly done. But I ribbed the board this morning, and fitted the whole thing together. Got up three hours earlier so's to get it done before breakfast. It was to be a surprise, don't you see?"

Magic phrase! "A surprise. Who for? For mother?"

Father shrugged his shoulders. "It's here when she wants it."

Harriet understood; but she remained silent, nodding wisely.

"I suppose," she ventured, "you couldn't make something for me, could you? You haven't time, I expect."

Father's queer smile gave her courage to be more explicit.

"I do so want something. It isn't a very big thing."

"Well, what is it?" demanded father, gruffly, becoming very busy with the saw once more.

"Only a baker's cart," pleaded Harriet. "Is it very hard to make a baker's cart?"

"Baker's cart!" said father, with unashamed conceit. "Easiest thing in the world, a baker's cart is. You watch, my dear!"

He strode over to his scrap-heap, hovered for a moment in contemplation, and then pounced on some pieces of wood. "Now, here we are. Let's get to work with the fret-saw." He got to work with the fret-saw, and with a hammer and tiny tintacks. "There you are—there's the beginning of your cart! Nice high cart bakers live in, with big yellow wheels, or do you prefer green wheels?"

"Red wheels," said Harriet.

"Red as blood," agreed father, in his excitement. "And now we'll make a partition here, and a dropboard fastened up with hooks and eyes like all the best dropboards. . . . Now that little place is where the loaves go, see."

"Oo, the loaves!"

"Quite so. *Oo, the loaves* is what the baker calls out; at least, ours does. He calls out just as he jumps off the step of his cart. Now, where shall we find something for a step? Two steps, in fact. One each side."

"And wheels? What are we going to make the wheels of?"

But father had already cut out two circular discs of thin wood.

"But they must have spikes!" objected Harriet.

"A very fair criticism," admitted father. "Spokes they shall have. We arrive at spokes by a process of elimination. Thus!" He sketched out the spokes with his stump of fat pencil—that fascinating pencil!—and again set to work with the fret-saw.

Harriet began to dance up and down, clapping her hands, as the baker's cart took shape before her eyes. Her slim, black-stockinged legs twinkled as she darted to and fro amid the litter of carpentry. These outbursts were rare: lyrical and irrepressible. For the most part she stood in speechless rapture, large eyes shining with joy from her peaked, elfish face.

"After lunch, a coat of paint," said father, gazing at his creation with pardonable satisfaction.

III

Mother stood in the doorway of the shed. She was displeased.

"Harriet! I've been looking for you everywhere. What are you doing here, hindering your father in his work."

"Only just watching, mother."

"Well, run along now and get your things on. I'm going to visit the Cottage Hospital. There's just time before lunch. You'd like to come with me, wouldn't you, darling?"

"Yes," said Harriet, without enthusiasm.

On the way into the house mother asked: "What is that new toy you've got there, dear? Show mother."

Harriet's fist reluctantly yielded up its treasure. "A baker's cart."

"A baker's cart. Aren't you getting a little too old for baker's carts, Harriet? Where did you get it?"

"Father made it for me."

"Indeed!" Mother's tone was chillier than ever. "Be quick and get your boots buttoned up, my child."

On the way to the Cottage Hospital, to which every few weeks it was mother's habit to take a basket of bounty, she talked to Harriet about the duty of kindness to those less fortunately circumstanced than ourselves. "We're going to see those poor little orphans, Harriet. You remember?"

Harriet remembered.

"Just a few dainties I'm taking them," said mother,

blithely. "It will give them so much pleasure, poor dears!"

Harriet agreed, her eyes moistening.

"Now isn't there any little thing you'd like to give?" said mother, persuasively. "There's poor Tommy Fish, who had that dreadful operation and will never be able to walk again. Think what that means, Harriet."

Harriet, clutching her mother's hand, trotted along in dumb distress.

"It would be nice to brighten the little fellow's life, wouldn't it, dear, if only for a day or two?"

"Oh, mother," said Harriet. "Shall I go back and fetch my Noah's Ark. I'm too old for that now, aren't I?"

"Yes, dear. But it's not very kind to give away only the things we don't want ourselves, is it?"

Harriet grew red with shame. "What shall I give him, mother?"

"I don't want to influence you," said mother. "It is for you to decide. A real sacrifice. If you feel you can. Now, if I were you. . . . there's this pretty little baker's cart."

"But that's at home," said Harriet, quickly.

Mother produced the baker's cart from her muff.

"No dear. Here it is."

"Oh, dear, he can't have that! He shan't!"

"A poor little orphan, Harriet."

Harriet whimpered. "I want it myself. I do. I've wanted it a long time. I don't believe Him above will mind me keeping it. I've got so many other things that I wouldn't miss. And Tommy Fish'd like them just as well."

"It's not only Tommy I'm thinking of, darling. It's you, too. It is more blessed to give, you know. . . . But, of course, I shan't force you."

Resentment, anger, fear, and despair: these in turn were Harriet's dominant emotions as they finished their walk to the Cottage Hospital. Admitted to the convalescent ward, mother distributed her gifts, going from bed to bed like an angel of mercy. Finally she paused at the foot of a bed where a pale-faced urchin lay stretched on his back grinning gallantly whenever a visitor addressed him.

"Here's Tommy Fish," said mother. "How are you this morning, Tommy?"

Tommy's boast of being much better this morning was cut short by a twinge of pain.

Harriet's lip quivered. She turned away her face and nudged her mother. "Give it to him, please, mother."

"Are you quite sure—" began mother.

"Yes. I want him to have it." A moment ago Harriet had hated Tommy Fish. But now she burned with hatred for something else, she knew not what, some shadowy thing that had made irony of the boy's cheerful answer.

"Tommy, my Harriet has brought you something. Just a little toy."

Harriet hid her flaming face during this ceremony. She wanted nothing but release from this house of torment. She tugged at her mother's arm.

To step into the open air again was like waking from an evil dream. Mother was still talkative, though subdued. As they entered the house she asked: "Are you glad, dear, or sorry that you parted with your little cart?"

"Glad," whispered Harriet.

"That's right." Harriet's mother was moved, perhaps by compunction. Her voice trembled a little.

"Tommy Fish is an orphan, isn't he, mother? That means he hasn't got a father, doesn't it?"

"Yes, dear. No mother or father."

"Oh," cried Harriet, "I'm so glad he had my baker's cart. 'Cause I've still got father, haven't I?"

Mother's face flamed, and paled as swiftly. She clenched her hands, and her eyes faltered as they strove to meet the innocent gaze of Harriet. She knew herself defeated.

Reviews

CURRENT VERSE

Exile. By Benj. Gilbert Brooks. Wilkinson, 187, High Road, Ilford. 2s. 6d. net.

Poems and Sonnets. By Frank Kendon. The Bodley Head. 5s. net.

Gathered Leaves. By C. M. Masterman. Jarrold. 3s. 6d. net.

The Death of Itylus. By Edward Glyn-Jones. Grant Richards. 5s. net.

At Dawn. By Evan Morgan. Kegan Paul. 6s. net.

A Jackdaw in Georgia. By W. K. Seymour. J. G. Wilson. 5s. net.

'EXILE' is printed at Dijon and obtainable at Ilford: it is issued in a limited edition: it sometimes rhymes and sometimes scans, but rarely does both at once: it is, in short, an expression of the modern and contemporary view that novelty of fashion is identical with originality of idea. That view always was modern; it is contemporary with the pyramids. Always it is your iconoclast who pays the most extravagant attention to the shape of the idols. All the same, there is an excuse for people who behave like Mr. Brooks. Messrs. Kendon, Masterman and Glyn-Jones are the excuse. They are not bad writers; indeed they are on the whole very good ones; and that is what exasperates the Brookses of this world. For there are many writers of verse who write very well: there have been many who did the same before them: and, so long as it is done in the forms and on the patterns of the past, there will be no disguising the fact that it involves saying the same things over and over again. What we doubt is whether Mr. Brooks's implied criticism is effective.

Mr. Masterman is learned, ingenious and amusing. He can skilfully contrive elaborate rhyme-schemes and quaint artifices of sound to express unexpectedness of thought; but Browning did it better. Mr. Glyn-Jones writes about the death of Itylus; but so did Swinburne (though the versions of that bewildering legend are different). He achieves a pleasant note in

A word
Sadder than evening when a distant flute
Is full of days gone by.

But—Wordsworth! Mr. Kendon, though for the most part orthodox, has in a few places adopted a novel—and, to our ears, melodious—device, which we will illustrate rather than explain:

I spend my days vainly,
Not in delight;
Though the world is elate,
And tastes her joys finely.

It is pretty, but it is not poetry.

We prefer Mr. Kendon at his more personal and less technical. That his verse is melodious amounts to little—almost anybody can compass melody: but every now and then there is a strong courageous note which rings better at a second reading than at a first. We like Mr. Kenyon's 'Proserpine'; but better still are 'Now to the World,' 'The Twisted Lane,' 'A First Crop'; and best of all is the sonnet ending:

Visions of lies! O turn, turn thou and prove
Never came such an age from such a love!

We would not be thought to condemn any of these poets. They have real gifts, genuine aspirations, knowledge and ability. We repeat that that is the difficulty. Only the divine note is rare, and nothing will do in its stead. Mr. Morgan, though he does not achieve it, seems to come near it now and then. But his technical accomplishment is quite inadequate, and most of his verses need nine years in a drawer. Mr. Seymour's parodies, though clever, are not sufficiently astringent to act as a corrective of false tendencies: he inclines to choose models of real genius and to imitate them rather than deride. That is why he fails with

Pope, having nothing in common with that great poet's packed and perfected wit; whereas his Mr. De la Mare resembles serious verse:

As soon as we passed
The nearest stars,
We saw God pouring
The seas from jars,
Beautiful jars,
All gold and green—
And scattering hills
And plains between.

That is jolly enough—only where is the parody? The Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson is really funny: it is indistinguishable from its original.

If we find Mr. Brooks the most interesting of a bunch whose main interest is that it is typical, that is not because of his eccentricities, nor even in spite of them. It is because of something with which eccentricities are not concerned—the plain fact that he has something definite to say. Surely

Bind fast your hair: there's no more peace in the stars
is a good line. It is, however, not modern. It might have been written by Ford or Webster. "Difficulter and difficulter!" It looks as if there were too much verse in the world. Poets should wait for the Muse. If it be retorted that Browning sat down to write for so many hours a day—well, much of Browning is sad stuff; and besides, now, we have no Brownings.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Jefferson Davis. By H. J. Eckenrode. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.

IT is "sixty years since" the great American Republic was divided against itself and only reasserted its essential unity by a long and—for those days—sanguinary war. The average English reader of today has but a vague idea of the cause and meaning of the Civil War, which he will find clearly expounded in Mr. Eckenrode's interesting biographical study of the President of the Southern States. Although written by an American for Americans, this history of a lost cause should find many sympathetic students in this country. Mr. Eckenrode has not confined himself to the mere limits of a biography, but has expounded the genesis and progress of the Civil War regarded as a contest between two rival and mutually exclusive types of civilization:

The cause of secession lay deeper than slavery, that convenient Satan of American history which has been held responsible for all ills of our past life. The cause of secession was the antagonism of the tropic Nordicism of the lower South for the meddling, non-Nordic industrial civilization of the North. . . . For two generations the two great types of American life had been developing side by side, but now the question had come as to which was to prevail.

Two outstanding figures—those of the planter and the business man—in Mr. Eckenrode's view, dominate the first century of American history. The foundation of the Republic was the work of the planters, headed by Washington and Jefferson—"proud men who ruled on their own estates and disliked the thoughts of kings and nobles over them." The business type is represented by Hamilton and Webster, carried on through Lincoln and Grant to Roosevelt and Pierpont Morgan. Jefferson Davis was an essential planter, who headed the final struggle of his class to sway the destinies of the United States. It is pleasant to meet with a biographer who has a definite thesis on which to base his narrative, and even if we may not see our way to carry the Nordic theory quite so far as Mr. Eckenrode does, we have read his development of it with considerable interest. We may specially note his contention that the victory of the North was on the whole unfortunate for the Nordic race—the adventurous masterful race which once inhabited the whole of northern and western Europe, but is now relatively most numerous in the British Isles:

Ever since the Civil War, the weakening of the Nordic strain in American life has proceeded apace. The American nation is more and more becoming a conglomeration of the alien races of Europe and Western Asia; it steadily grows less political, less individual and less masterful—that is, less Nordic.

Mr. Eckenrode gives a good account of the way in which the semi-tropical Southern States diverged from the industrial North; in them the Anglo-Saxon was "a Nordic towering over inferiors," and the needs of the cotton plantation and the rice field made slavery an obviously necessary institution. Like Mark Twain, he traces a great part of the distinctively Southern civilization to the overwhelming influence of Scott, through whom it became a compound of African jungle, medieval Europe, and American democracy. His narrative of the war—in which, like Colonel Whittton, he rightly regards Vicksburg as the decisive battle—is an excellent historical summary, and his presentation of the pathetically well-meaning but ineffectual figure of Jefferson Davis himself leaves nothing to be desired.

THE ORIGIN OF SPECIE

Precious Metals as Money. A Study of the Prehistoric Origin and Historic Development of this Use. By William Kemp. Paisley : Alexander Gardner. London : Simpkin, Marshall. 12s. 6d. net.

THE beginnings of a monetary consciousness have been often dealt with, but not in the manner of Mr. Kemp. We have had books setting forth the early instruments of barter and others detailing the size and weight of elementary coins, but this volume embodies a more ambitious purpose.

The position which gold, and it is with this metal the author principally deals, has come to hold in the civilized world is one of extraordinary power. In spite of many attacks upon the ground of the irrationality of basing credit upon a metal whose supplies fluctuate and whose annual output diminishes, gold continues to serve this important purpose in the countries financially strongest, and is likely to do so for a long time to come. It is certainly remarkable that a metal which was employed as one of the earliest forms of money currency should, upon examination, reveal the possession of virtues which we are unable, so far, satisfactorily to replace. This fact has provoked the interest of Mr. Kemp and he endeavours to trace the probable course of affairs which led to the increasing importance of gold in primitive times and especially to follow its evolution into currency. That alluvial gold would be likely to attract attention, even of a savage, is natural enough, but as to how and when the metal passed from the stage of ornament to that of a medium of exchange is a matter for speculation, with very little material to guide one's thoughts. Mr. Kemp has endeavoured to depict this transition in the first part of his book and his interesting effort is, as he himself admits, necessarily imaginative, although there is nothing extravagant in his assumptions. For this reason the chapters cannot rank as economic history and, indeed, the remainder of the book, which is almost entirely concerned with pre-Christian eras, scarcely falls within that category, even when he gets as far as the introduction of coined money and the development of money use in Greece and Rome. We should be inclined to classify the volume as an attempt to set forth man's mental growth as it expressed itself in the one direction of the use of gold as an exchange medium, with an account of various contributory influences and reactions. It is inevitable that in some parts an impression is given of the subject being extended beyond the length it will strictly bear, but there is always a relevant underlying philosophy quietly emphasized, namely, that the origin and evolution of a precious metal standard of exchange has "all the characteristics of a great world purpose." In such general terms few would dispute the contention, or the fact that the wide distribution of virgin gold over the earth led, through exploration, to a growth of international commerce. Whether in the present stage of

human progress the search for gold is indispensable to progress may be legitimately doubted.

Mr. Kemp has, in fact, presented a case for the gold standard from the novel standpoint of belief in the gradual assertion of a law which, although he does not actually say so, we feel he would accept as being divinely ordained. We agree that gold is still best fitted for the basis of the credit system, but do not see why it should inevitably remain so until the end of time. Nevertheless, Mr. Kemp has presented his historical and prehistorical case for gold as the touchstone of civilization very thoughtfully and has opened up new ground, although it is largely of a theoretical nature.

SUNDAY SCHOLASTICA

Crotchets : A few short musical notes. By Percy A. Scholes. John Lane. 7s. 6d. net.

THAT, one feels sure, is the signal which Mr. Scholes would hoist to the head of this review, were he writing about his collection of weekly lectures in the *Observer*. For he has the air of a schoolmaster enlivened with a facetiousness whose aptness often turns it to wit. He heads an article on Stravinsky, 'The Rite—and the Wrong of it,' and proceeds to talk to his public "like a father" about the errors of Mr. Edwin Evans. His didactic methods have apparently provoked the habitual writers of indignant letters. Here is an extract, which he quotes :

Dear Sir, If you are supposed to write musical criticisms, would it not be better to do so, instead of merely furnishing us with paragraphs expressing your personal prejudices?

But even before that—we will beat Mr. Scholes at his own game—our crotchety critic does not quaver.

Yes, Mr. Scholes has his crotchets about popular music, Welsh Choirs, Wagner, Bach's 'Chaconne' and other musical "cabbages and kings." Often we find ourselves singing in unison with him. But we cannot keep in tune when he condemns Bach's 'Chaconne' as bad violin music. Curiously he proceeds to knock the bottom out of his argument by quoting from Schweitzer, who points out that in Bach's time the Germans played with a loose bow-string. This enabled them to sound chords with ease, though it did not produce the full and brilliant tone we get from the taut Italian bow. But, even so, one is not prepared to accept his view of the 'Chaconne.' It is true that only two or three masters can play it satisfactorily; but in their hands it becomes the greatest of pieces for the instrument, just as the "bad pianism" of Beethoven's C minor sonata is transmuted into glorious music by a great executant.

About Wagner, the most interesting subject for the critic's pen, Mr. Scholes has nothing new to say. He revives a few old gibes about the machinery of the operas, and laments their excessive length. It was with something like amazement that we read, and re-read to make sure that we had read aright, the following sentences :

His libretti, read as plays, though too long and involved, do not come out badly; it is the setting to music that makes them so tiresome. . . . There is many a passage that one thinks rather fine when one reads it . . . which yet becomes insufferable when it is drawled out to a copious orchestral commentary.

There is much to criticize in Wagner's works and still more to appreciate, and it seems unfortunate that a critic, who has constituted himself the mentor of uninstructed opinion, should take up such a superficial attitude towards the composer. Mr. Scholes is fulfilling a very useful purpose in musical criticism with great ability; but, in this case, he seems to have forgotten the responsibilities, which his position carries with it, for the sake of a few not very amusing jests.

It is pleasanter to turn to the good things in the book. By far the best of these is the analysis of "polytonality" and "atonality," an easily intelligible exposition of a complex subject. His example of Bach's

use of polytonal counterpoint is particularly interesting to one who is convinced that there never was and never will be any dodge which that uncannily clever old prophet was not "up to." There is also an excellent chapter on 'What is melody?' which should be taken in conjunction with the argument that silken tunes cannot be made out of a sow's grunting.

There are one or two creases in the writing, which should have been ironed out before the essays were collected in book form. Does Mr. Scholes really mean what he says in the following passage?

'Bubbles' is "Sung by Fred Barnes." His portrait, with a very good set of teeth and a nice pipe, appeared in large letters . . .

ONE WOMAN'S WANDERINGS

Wanderings in South-Eastern Seas. By Charlotte Cameron. Fisher Unwin. 15s. net.

THIS is a lively and readable travel-book, which substantiates Mrs. Cameron's claim to have wandered over more of the globe than any other woman. On the page next to that which carries a Foreword to this volume she gives her itinerary from 1910 to 1923, which shows that during those years she must have covered something like a quarter of a million miles—the greatest travel "record" for a woman, as her publishers state, no doubt quite accurately. She says she has seen "most of this wonderful world," but her desire to "explore yet farther" remains unquenched. She has journeyed thousands of miles on every continent, and visited the out-of-the-way, little-known places, as well as the great cities and other centres of general interest.

Mrs. Cameron begins with a chapter on Singapore, a subject at present highly topical and likely, we think, to be so for a long time to come. She does not take sides about the proposed naval base, but her point of view is seen in her opening sentence, "Singapore is rightly described as the gateway of the Far East." It is one of the few commanding strategic points of the world. Mrs. Cameron has some bright and entertaining things to say about the city, not forgetting to remind us that it was founded just a little over a century ago by that great Englishman, Sir Stamford Raffles, who realized the deep significance of its position. There is perhaps no more cosmopolitan place nowadays than Singapore, as is testified by the fact, which she notes, that no fewer than fifty-four languages and dialects are recorded and interpreted in its courts. The Chinese element is very strong, and bears striking witness to the silent but steady march of adventuring Chinese throughout these south-eastern seas, a feature of the Pacific question that cannot be overlooked.

From Singapore Mrs. Cameron takes us to Johore, and tells us much that is interesting of its Sultan. Then we move on to Malacca, and then to Miri, one of the world's richest oil fields, in Sarawak, of the beneficent work of whose English White Rajahs Mrs. Cameron has naturally to give some account, and of course an appreciative one. But we question whether she is quite right when she says that "the great majority of people have no idea at all of Sarawak," for surely the romance of the Brookes is known to most people. From Sarawak we are transported to Java, "the peerless gem," according to the Dutch guide-books, "in that Empire of Insulinde which winds about the Equator like a garland of emeralds." Mrs. Cameron leads us to understand that the Dutch guide-books, while inviting all and sundry to come to Java, wisely do not dwell on the fact that the peerless gem, like other peerless gems, is astonishingly expensive, everything there being very dear for the tourist, who, however, visits it in considerable numbers. One of the best things in the book is the description of the Botanical Gardens at Buitenzorg which are unrivalled. But the book is full of good things.

The Magazines

The *Fortnightly* for March opens with the story of 'Lord Curzon at the Foreign Office,' by Mr. Hugh Spender, written in a laudatory spirit—an agreeable relief from the critics who only discovered his shortcomings when he had left office. Dr. Pemewan foretells the absorption of the Liberals by the Labour Party, forming in consequence a new Radical Party. Mr. John Bailey thinks Labour will split on Finance. Sir Michael O'Dwyer points out that the interests of the masses of agricultural India are quite overlooked by the politicians here or there. Mr. Herbert Bailey in 'The Passing of Lenin' discusses his influence on Russia from the point of view of permanent results. Miss Martin discusses 'Thomas Vaughan, Magician,' with no marked knowledge of Vaughan or of what he was writing about. Mr. H. Cohen tells the story of the *Sors Virgiliana* which fell to Charles I., and goes on to a number of other such divinations from Homer, Shakespeare, and the Bible. The general reader will feel rather neglected this month.

The *National Review* certainly does not open with any justification of Lord Curzon in the 'Episodes of the Month'; much the reverse. Mr. Maxse is almost glad to see a Labour Government in for the discipline it will bring to the Conservative Party. "Centurion" deals with the American Debt, our tribute to the United States, as he calls it. Mr. Amery gives his view of the origin of our industrial supremacy, quietly putting into the background the fact that we had a monopoly and did not allow the export of machinery till well on in the nineteenth century. There are entertaining articles on 'Christmas on the Nile,' 'Chinese Servants' and the 'Archaeology of Wig and Gown,' while "Berliner" shows how Germany is swelling with riches.

Blackwood has a pleasant paper by Mr. Stephen Gwynn on a tour in 'Western France' in search of trout fishing and Anjou wine, describing the beauties of some little-visited cathedrals. 'The Ginger-Beer Standard' comes happily to its appointed end—a very satisfactory story. 'The Harvest of Abu Saba' is another good story by "Fulanain," whom we are glad to see again. Gen. Scott-Moncrieff describes 'An Old Term at Woolwich.' 'Musings Without Method' deal with Mr. Morel, Russia, Mr. MacDonald, and the Conservative Party.

Life & Letters has some verse by Messrs. Eden Philpotts, W. H. Davies, Wilfrid Thesiger, and others, a good short story by Mr. Foster-Melliar, a study of Mr. Edmund Gosse as a poet, and notes on the Repertory Theatres of Manchester and Birmingham. Mr. Garratt revives the forgotten Mr. Robert Bage, whose main distinction is that he had Sir Walter for his biographer. Mr. B. Lintott re-echoes the customary praise of Sanderson of Oundle, whose work has already fallen to pieces.

Cornhill opens with a personal sketch of Lenin by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher which throws some light on his motives and character. A third paper on R. L. S. presents him as an instructor in the art of writing English prose. Mr. Algernon Gissing describes the hilly side of Durham and the North Riding, and Col. Gardyne chamois-shooting in the Austrian Alps. There are three quite good short stories and a couple of semi-historical notes.

The *English Review* opens with a plea for 'Conservative Reconstruction' and the career open to talents. Dr. Shadwell lays down a detailed programme in 'The Principles of Liquor Control.' Mr. Charles Whibley begins a series of 'The Letters of an Englishman,' and apropos of Lenin inquires 'What is Greatness?' Sir Henry McMahon initiates an Empire Supplement with a paper on the 'Fellowship of the British Empire Exhibition.' There are two stories, some verse, and a few general articles.

The World To-Day gives a great deal of its space to oil, with articles by Mr. Cavendish on the Somerset shale cliffs, which promise an abundant English supply, and by Mr. Shaw Desmond on the relations between oil, war, and world-power. Other good papers are on Japan, the Amazon country, and on Messrs. Smith and Sons.

The Sociological Review echoes Prof. Petrie in an article by Mr. Dawson. Mr. Lloyd discusses 'New Economic Policies in Russia and U.S.A.' Mr. Fordham writes on 'The Reconstruction of Rural England,' and Prof. Geddes proposes a 'Co-ordination of the Social Sciences' with diagrams to aid his exposition.

Psyche has notes and papers on M. Jules Romains and his claims to a method of perception through the body-surface, 'Psycho-analysis and Art,' by M. Charles Baudouin, by Mr. A. K. Sharma, giving the Hindu equivalents for the language of auto-suggestion, and by Mr. I. A. Richards on 'Desire and the Desirable,' this latter an important study.

Foreign Affairs has important articles on 'Greater France,' by M. Henri Hauser, 'The World's Crisis in Cotton,' 'The British Flag on the Caspian,' by Sir Percy Sykes, and 'Recent Irish History,' among others. Treating international affairs from an American point of view, it affords new light on them.

New Fiction

BY GERALD GOULD

Lummox. By Fannie Hurst. Cape. 7s. 6d. net.
Not Without Honour. By Vera Brittain. Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net.

Deep Meadows. By Margaret Rivers Larminie. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d. net.

The Passing of the Pengwerns. By Margaret M. Leigh. Heinemann. 6s. net.

The Stretton Street Affair. By William Le Queux. Cassell. 7s. 6d. net.

SHE was a simple servant girl; and she loved her mistress's son, who was a poet; and she had a baby, and parted from it for its own good, so that it might have the advantages which had been denied to its mother. And she befriended another girl, even poorer than herself, who ultimately was saved by kind people and received a diploma registering her at an industrial bureau as a graduate milliner of the Christie Street Vocational Guidance School for Girls. . .

But no, dear reader, this is not one of those lavender-scented romances that young ladies used to bedew with the tears of sensibility when all the world was Yonge; this is meant to be the grim but splendid record of the lyric soul inarticulate amid sordid and often ghastly surroundings; and, but for its style, it might succeed in being so. It is a psychological study by—let the publisher say it—"a hitherto unrevealed Fannie Hurst." Here, he adds, "one of America's leading short-story writers has suddenly come forward with a strange new power." It is written in the impressionist style, the opposite of that method which gave so much pleasure to Charles Lamb: "wherein it is profitable that he can orderly decline his noun and his verb." Miss Hurst does indeed decline her verbs, but in the other sense. She can do better without them, thank you. This is how she describes the reading of a poem:

Slow oxen words ploughing up secrets of the soil. Gleaming submarine words. Words out of jewelled sands. Heavy words that thundered into wisdom. The strange wisdom of the silence that stood stock still. The hexameter of the wide, white feet that the earth sucked unto herself in fond little marshes, as they ran through the forests surrounding the Cathedral Under the Sea. The song that was locked in a heart and hurt there. Rhythm. The fandango of sound. The saga of the silence of Bertha—there behind the swinging doors, hearing herself bleed into words. The brook of the frozen tears thawing upon Rollo's lips. The flamingoes flying—

I have deliberately, for fairness, chosen a passage which means something—though I confess that even here I am baffled once. What does "the hexameter of the wide, white feet" mean? Does it mean "the wide, white feet of the hexameter"? I think not—not because the feet of a hexameter are no more white than ecstasy is triangular, for that would scarcely be regarded, I suppose, as a difficulty; but rather because the human foot seems to be indicated. This school of thought has a fondness for physical detail, from head to foot; and in particular it harps on hips. But I don't know that this is really so brave, even if it is necessary: the very Victorians had two hips apiece, and never found the fact remarkable.

Miss Hurst is, I venture to suspect, better than her convention. She has a sense of character, and some of the episodes in her extremely episodic story would be affecting if they were more intelligible. Nor does she always fail with the convention itself. There are moments when its broken brilliance gives her just the effect she needs, and the right word startles one into appreciation from between two full stops. But her manner is often pretentiously nonsensical, and defeats its purpose by its own excess.

Miss Brittain and Miss Larminie, contrariwise, let their language fall a little short of their intention. 'Not

Without Honour' has an excellent theme; it presents us with one of those slightly histrionic, self-worshipping, self-pitying fanatics in whom an ardent girl can adore the martyr and the saint, while the detached un-sentimental observer condemns the humbug and the mountebank; and both are right. But the telling is rather long and flat.

Miss Larminie is evidently determined to avoid flatness, and at her worst sounds laboured and self-conscious: but she can write, and rises once or twice to a big scene. Only, she cannot keep on doing it. The big scenes are too many. Indeed, I do not think Miss Larminie plays fair. There are such things as unhappy marriages, thwarted elopements, fatal polo accidents, strange vices, murders in houses of ill-fame, and gigantic swindles in the City. But nevertheless it must be extremely rare for any one person to come into direct contact with the consequences of all these varied disasters in the brief passage from youth to middle-age. The assault on one's feelings is illegitimate. And it is difficult to see why Miss Larminie, of all people, should make it; for she has a real talent, and for something utterly different. Her strength is a quiet one. Far the best thing in the present book is the relation of the middle-aged but still weak and timid and foolish and charming Mary to her three daughters—one a bully, one a prig, and one a darling, and all in their several ways so much older than their mother.

But oh how I hate, despise and repudiate the lean and limping lover who carries a chaste but aching heart through the long and lonely bachelorhoods of a thousand novels, relieving his feelings only by sermons addressed to the heroine on her moral shortcomings, and wearing rimless glasses!

Matter falling below manner, and manner falling below matter, prove alike the absence of a strong central inspiration; it is always inspiration that gives artistic unity, whether the actual achievement be easy and sudden or painfully wrought towards perfection. Miss Leigh's book is inspired. It rings perfectly true, because it is as it must be. There is no gap between the way of saying and the thing said. There is no improbability in the plot, for the whole world in which the events pass is consistent with itself, so that nothing which happens within it can be brought in isolation to the bar of external judgment: it is solidly bodied forth by the imagination, and must be judged as a whole. It is no use for me to say, as I can most heartily, that I am tired of stories about Cornwall, and in particular of stories about grim old Cornish families whose sole function is to die out. That is not the point. The Pengwerns are not just a Cornish family; they are the Pengwerns; and they live before they die. The tale is told in scraps from letters, reminiscences, and a journal. All the characters speak and talk in the same style, and the style is Miss Leigh's—a fine and simple one. This improbability would be a gross fault in a book which aimed at the illusion of life; but where, as here, the imagination is at once strong and strange, no direct "realism" is in question, any more than when people talk blank verse on the stage.

After getting Miss Mirrlees for review last week, and Miss Leigh this, I realize vividly and gratefully that reviewing shares with racing the excitement of spotting potential winners.

THIS WEEK'S THRILLER

Mr. Le Queux is an old hand at concocting fantastic mystery-stories, with plenty of crime located impartially in plenty of places. In 'The Stretton Street Affair' we pass lightly from England to France, Italy and Spain. Everywhere there are sinister characters, dubious clues, international finance, and poison: but principally poison. There is also a beautiful young woman (poisoned, of course—but of course not fatally). The mystery is, if anything, a little too elaborate, but it is sustained with admirable gusto.

Round the Library Table

A MISCELLANY

THE idea of building a miniature doll's house for a sovereign lady by an association of workers in all the arts would seem more naturally to arise in some small Italian Court of the late Renaissance, such as Modena or Ferrara, than in the London of Georgian England, yet it is here and now that it has come into being, to be seen this summer by the visitors to Wembley. Readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW will have a double interest in their inspection of this dream-palace, for on the King's table they will find a miniature copy of our REVIEW, an exact replica of our first number in the year 1923, among the few journals chosen to represent the Press of Great Britain, and in the library, among the books specially written for the purpose, will be seen one entitled 'A Toy Philosophy.' By Filson Young.

* * *

This little volume has a book-plate designed for the occasion, and is written on vellum in the excellent handwriting of Mr. J. Kelly, calligrapher for Messrs. Sangorski. I understand some of the works will be printed *in extenso*; I hope, if it is not too late, that all of them will be. They would make a worthy companion to the *Guirlande de Julie* and others of the fellowship. I do not quite know how far discretion bids me be silent on the subject of 'A Toy Philosophy.' It is dedicated 'To the Children of this House,' and passes from a consideration of Toys in the past, to the part played by imagination, to a more serious view of the Toys of the Grown-up, and lastly to a train of thought crystallized in the title 'Owning and Loving.' Readers who have known, as I have, Mr. Young's work for years, will not need to be told with what simplicity, the very sublimation of art, such a topic is treated.

* * *

Mr. T. Earle Welby has done well to revive a book too long forgotten, 'The Early French Poets, by Henry Francis Cary' (Philpot, 5s. net). It consists of a number of papers, written and printed in various periodicals between 1821 and 1825, but not collected into a volume till 1846, after his death. Mr. Welby's Introduction is lamentably short, but it does insist on the extraordinary fact that an English writer should turn his attention to French poets who were, not forgotten, but despised by the greater part of their countrymen at the time. I was particularly interested to notice the various poems that Cary selected for translation and comment. Hardly one of them would be selected by a writer of the present day—the exception—Villon's 'Ballade of the Ladies of Past Time'—being almost forced upon him.

* * *

I don't know whether this publication will stir into flame a controversy which has been quietly smouldering for some years. Nearly a century ago Sir Henry Ellis edited for Mr. Watson Taylor a manuscript containing a large number of poems in English attributed to Charles d'Orléans, who was taken prisoner at Agincourt and remained here for a quarter of a century. These poems largely correspond to French ones accepted as his, and as a consequence are put down as translations. Quite recently M. Pierre Champion, in the course of his study of Charles, has found a number of English poems in his own handwriting, and with forms of letters showing the peculiarities of our

language. A renewed investigation of the ballad sequence in English shows that these poems contain rhymes which were impossible to any Englishman but were perfectly consistent with a French ear. It also shows that the scheme of the two sequences is more complete in English than in French, and a certain possibility is established that the English poems were the original and the French an after-thought, just as Wilde's 'Salomé' was written in French, the English being an after-thought. Cary's note, then, on p. 183, dates from a period when the philological evidence could not have been brought forward. It would be amusing if future historians of literature were forced to put Charles d'Orléans among the post-Chaucerians.

* * *

I gather that Mr. John Buchan's series 'The Nations of To-Day' has not met with uniform appreciation from my colleagues. I am bound to say that the volume on 'Ireland,' by R. H. Murray and Hugh Law (Hodder and Stoughton, 15s. net), seems to me quite admirable, especially in the earlier chapters. I am only interested in actual facts and in the history of literature, and facts, verifiable statements, about early Ireland are quite rare. As a disinterested reader, their native literature seems to me to be made up of monstrous exaggerations of fancy; their social condition, at the arrival of Christianity, to have been on a level with that of the Zulus except that they never had the good fortune to have a Chaka; and the chief product of their learning in the early centuries a series of forgeries which puzzled and misled every chronologist from Bede up to the seventeenth century. A history of Irish forgeries would make a good subject for a thesis at one of the Irish Universities.

* * *

Seriously, I think this history as good a one as can be written at the present time. It treats Irish history from the European point of view rather than the purely local one. It is a method which, in some ways, brings out the importance of Ireland much more than the ridiculous rhodomontade of Mrs. Green and her like; in others, shows how it was used as a pawn in the great struggles of the Continent. I have formed no opinion on the part of the work for which Mr. Law is responsible; I believe him to have a very full knowledge of the facts, and to be an able and fearless writer, but in reading about Ireland I like to have a few centuries between me and my subject.

* * *

I see from the current number of the *Mercure de France* that the question of the pronunciation of Latin has been raised again in that country; this time from a novel point of view to us, the musical one. The Abbé Rousselot, professor of experimental phonetics at the Collège de France, in the course of an address last summer advocated a pronunciation more in harmony with the genius of the French language than that adopted by Italian teachers and singers. French is a sort of noisy Latin, of course; but the notion that anyone should expect to understand the words of a singer—whether in Latin or no—strikes me as unusual. The Abbé's paper in the *Mercure* is principally devoted to the changes in the vowel sounds and the "c" since the Renaissance.

LIBRARIAN

"When we have produced an antiseptic which can be taken internally without risk of injury to cell-tissue, we shall have conquered infectious disease."—LORD LISTER.

The Medicine Stamp

An appeal to the Government on behalf of the unemployed, ex-service men, old-age pensioners, widows, working classes and middle classes

ON practically every package of proprietary medicine sold to the public in Great Britain the buyer pays a heavy duty to the State under the Medicine Stamp Act. A tax more thoughtlessly imposed, more cruel in its results, more unfair to the working classes and the nation in general would be hard to imagine. It is as though the State said to the unhappy victim of disease: Your health is impaired; you are, or may soon be, unable to earn your living; so we will add to your burdens and anxieties by greatly increasing the cost of your medicines; we will make your return to health as costly as possible.

The medicine stamp duty is callous and anti-social. Health is a national asset. When a worker breaks down in health the product of his labour is lost to the nation. It is a time when his difficulties should be lightened, his path to recovery made easy. And it is the time the State chooses to place an extra tax upon him. One would almost think that this tax has been inspired by a desire to keep the workers ill as long as possible, in order to ensure their economic dependence.

The excuse that this duty is required to produce revenue makes it only more odious. Why should revenue be raised at the expense of health? Would not the nation's interests be better served by finding this revenue from taxes on articles that are not absolute necessities? The man who buys a diamond ring at, say, £30 would not grudge another 3s. in tax. A duty of one halfpenny per yard on silks and satins sold over the counter at 5s. or more would be easily paid. Furs and laces could also yield revenue. Such taxes would affect those with means to pay. The medicine tax falls heavily upon the poor, the working and the middle classes.

The plea that the medicine stamp duty protects the public against fraudulent medicines will not bear examination. The duty is levied alike upon preparations of proved value, like 'Yadil,' and upon worthless so-called remedies. In the case of the latter, the tax aids rather than prevents fraud, since it is well known that many people regard the medicine stamp (which

merely indicates that the duty has been paid) as in some sense a State guarantee of the medicine they buy. Of the morality of a State which profits by such frauds upon the poor, the ignorant and the credulous, the less said the better.

The figures given below show the exorbitant, I almost wrote the vindictive, tax imposed upon the medicines of the people. The second row of figures gives the prices which were charged for 'Yadil' Antiseptic before 1st October, 1923, the date when the medicine stamp duty was first imposed upon it. These prices would still prevail but for the imposition of this unfair tax. The increase to the public is of necessity greater than the actual cost of the stamp, since discount has to be given to the trade upon the value of the stamp itself.

By every post I receive letters from ex-service men, unemployed, old-age pensioners, widows and others, complaining bitterly of the increased prices of 'Yadil' Antiseptic. These people had begun treatment with 'Yadil' for some chronic disorder, when the increased prices put 'Yadil' beyond their means. They have since had to go without it or deprive themselves and children of necessities in order to buy it. Panel patients who had been refused 'Yadil' by their panel doctors were in many instances buying it themselves. Now they find that impossible. The hope of health is dashed from these—thanks to the medicine stamp duty.

To such complaints I reply that it is within the power of Parliament only, not in mine, to remove this tax, that all panel patients are entitled to have 'Yadil' prescribed for them if that is the best treatment in their case, and that panel doctors who fail to do so commit a breach of faith towards their patients.

From time to time legislation is introduced with the apparent intention of protecting the public against poisonous drugs contained in proprietary medicines. The discovery of my antiseptic 'Yadil' will, however, do more than any Act of Parliament ever could, to do away with the use of poisons in treating diseases. Before 'Yadil' there may have been some excuse for prescribing poisons—there is none

now, and we can be sure that the use of these dangerous substances will gradually disappear without any interference by the Government, other than the abolition of the medicine stamp duty. Is it likely that people will ever again consent to have poisons forced upon them, when 'Yadil' is available through every chemist in the country? Why should they? 'Yadil' is absolutely non-poisonous, non-irritant, non-caustic. It does more than any poisonous drug or serum can ever do. It destroys in the system the bacterial infection which is the cause of nine diseases in ten. It means health with absolute safety. It renders obsolete the whole of the poisons and serums of the British Pharmacopoeia, and such substances as iodine and quinine, which are not free from danger to cell-tissue.

The exemption of veterinary remedies from the operation of the Act sheds a vivid light upon the minds of those who first imposed the medicine stamp duty and those who have since maintained it. Preparations intended for animals are not required to pay this duty, only those intended for human beings. If your dog suffers from distemper the State does not interfere to make its medicine dearer than need be. But if your child has whooping cough or measles, then the State steps in and taxes you heavily. In the opinion of the State, it seems, the life of a dog is of greater importance than that of a child. Is it any wonder that children should die in their tens of thousands when the State shows greater solicitude for animal life than for human life?

The annual death-rate in the British Isles can be reduced by over one hundred thousand lives, provided the whole of the people use 'Yadil.' But to use it they must be able to buy it. That it may come within the reach of the masses, the Statute Book must be purged of this anti-social tax, and the equivalent revenue, if needed, be derived from articles of luxury. A reduction of the duty is not enough. It should be entirely wiped out. So long as it remains in force, so long will the ex-service men, the unemployed, the widows, the working and middle classes, and others of restricted means, continue to provide a large annual quota of avoidable deaths.

Yes, more than one hundred thousand lives a year can be saved in the British Isles alone, and at least fifty thousand in the Dominions, the Colonies, Protectorates, and other parts of

the Empire. These lives are needed in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Canada, if these vast empty domains are to be filled with hardy British stock, to maintain in all parts of the world the British ideals of law, order and freedom.

But there are formidable obstacles in the way. There is the medicine stamp here, and the duties on medicines in the Dominions, which Governments alone can remove. There is bacterial infection, the immediate cause of most diseases, which 'Yadil' masters readily if used in good time. There is the deep ignorance of the people, even of the highly educated, as to the root-cause of bacterial infection. I give full information upon that important subject in THE YADIL BOOK, so that any one may learn how to avoid disease and live without ever needing any remedies, even my antiseptic. There is the incredible fact that the rising generation is never taught the laws of Nature which govern health and long life—as though we were eager to pass on to our children our taints and diseases.

I will never cease to urge upon the authorities here and throughout the Empire, the importance of making the teaching of those laws the very corner-stone of our educational system. How can a race avoid perishing if it does not know how to keep in good health, and reach old age free from disease and infirmities?

I trust that my appeal, made in the highest national and Imperial interests, may find an echo throughout the country and win support from men of influence in the councils of the Empire. Then it would be heard and granted by the men who have at heart the welfare of the whole people, especially of the producing classes, who are the worst hit by the medicine stamp duty.

Alex Clements

19, Sicilian Avenue,
London, W.C. 1.

P.S.—I will gladly send a copy of THE YADIL BOOK to any address at home or abroad, on receipt of half a crown. Every book sold helps me in my campaign against disease and avoidable deaths.

'YADIL' ANTISEPTIC	2 oz.	6 oz.	Pint	Quart	'YADIL' OINTMENT,	1oz.	4oz.
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The medicine stamp duty is a blot upon our civilisation, for it betrays a contempt for the poor and their physical miseries not in keeping with that brotherly love which we owe to them

Acrostics

PUBLISHERS' PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set.

RULES

1. The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm on the list printed on February 16.

2. The coupon for the week must be enclosed.

3. Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified.

Awards of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions, which must reach us not later than the Friday following publication.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 105.

A BROAD-CHURCH PARSON; AND A LINCOLN SQUIRE.

1. Loves the warm precincts of the kitchen fire.
2. Bid him show cause why he too should not die.
3. "Sent, for his country's good, abroad to lie."
4. Changed from one's pristine state and born anew.
5. "Catches the small flies, but the large break through."
6. Three-fifths remove of this terrestrial sphere.
7. Twice twelve brief hours superfluous appear.
8. You are? A weekly touchstone we provide!
9. Foes press: you're safer on its inner side.
10. By night before the dragon well he rode.
11. The pill was bitter, as this plainly showed.
12. Partook with me in lesson and in game.
13. A proud metropolis once bore this name.
14. We'll call it Strife, since here our herdmen strove.
15. Flutters Jamaica's fair in field and grove.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 103.

A NOVELIST AND HIS BOOK—OF MANY, ONE.

1. Trod oft by furious Frank and fiery Hun.
2. The Songstress who o'er Tragedy presides.
3. From form to form all changes; nought abides.
4. Ready he stands our noddles to embellish.
5. Small, but affords a very pleasant relish.
6. To full discussion sometimes detrimental.
7. Curtail a light pavilion oriental.
8. Famed for the cheeses that its people make.
9. Half a rebound—our childhood's duck-and-drake.
10. When danger's nigh its warning sound is heard.
11. A happy season, but uncommon word.

Solution of Acrostic No. 103.

W ar-pat	H	1 "Ovid, Metamorphoses, XV. 590-1 and passim.
M elpomen	E	In Heaven, in Earth, in all above, below,
T ransmutatio	N ¹	In Heaven, in Earth, in all above, below,
H airdresse	R	Life shifts with endless change from form to form." (Henry King's version.)
A nthov	Y	North of Amsterdam; also famous for its beautiful fifteenth-century church
C losur	E	2 North of Amsterdam; also famous for its beautiful fifteenth-century church
K io	Sk	3 "In youthhead, happy se son."— Southey.
E da	M ²	
R ic	Ochet	
A larm-gu	N	
Y outhhea	D ³	

ACROSTIC NO. 103.—The winner is Mr. William Birkenruth, Junior Athenæum Club, 116 Piccadilly, W.1, who has selected as his prize 'William Bentinck and William III,' by Marion E. Grew, published by Murray and reviewed in our columns on February 23 under the title of 'A King's Friend.' Twenty-nine other solvers wished for this book, thirty-one named 'My Native Devon,' sixteen 'W. H. Hudson,' six 'In Primitive New Guinea,' etc., etc.

Correct solutions were also received from Hanworth, Travell, Eureka, W. H. Fearis, M. Story, F. I. Morcom, Lenno, Joker, Doric, C. E. C., Boskerris, Vixen, Carlton, Merton, L. M. Maxwell, Baitho, E. Barrett, Jop, Farsdon, A. B. Miller, M. Kingsford, Shorne Hill, John Lennie, St. Ives, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, Eldav, Jeff, and J. Chambers.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—L. Wallis, M. A. S. McFarlane, East Sheen, Madge, N. O. Sellam, L. W. Phillips, Still Waters, Gay, Varach, C. E. P., C. J. Warden, Twyford, Raga, R. C. Hart-Davis, Peter, 3V, G. H. Rodolph, Carrie, F. M. Petty, Coque, A. M. W. Maxwell, Albert E. K. Wherry, A. de V. Blathwayt, Lilian, Dolmar, Nora H. Boothroyd, Spican, Beehive, Margaret, Hon. R. G. Talbot, Quis, Martha, Old Mancunian, Tyro, Rev. J. A. Easten, Iago, Henry Hiles, Brum, Plumbago, B. Brewster, Monks Hill, Glamis, Cabbage, Stucco, F. I. Morcom, and R. H. Keate.

Two LIGHTS WRONG.—Sanda, Mrs. Culley, Mrs. McCalman, Crucible, K. M. P., Oakapple, C. R. Price, The Pelhams, Rev. A. R. A. Watson, Lady Duke, D. L., Lady Mottram, C. H. Burton, C. A. S., Met, W. Sydney Price, F. S. Lea, Mrs. W. H. Myers, and Mrs. J. Butler. All others more.

For Light 3 Transformation is accepted, and for Light 11 Youthhood.

MARGARET.—Certainly, and I wish you success, but you have not made a very good start.

W. S. P.—I think Overdose preferable.

GLAMIS.—Solvers were not asked to behead a word; Lazulite has not "lost its initial," as Azure has.

W. G. P.—Books selected must be published by firms in our list. Enteric is not so general as Epidemic. Not everything is finally overwhelmed by an Inundation.

FOTHERINGHAY CHURCH.—The Vicar wishes to thank our Solvers who have contributed to the Restoration Fund. He informs me that nineteen correct solutions were received, and that the prize I offered was won by the Rev. J. W. Kidston.

ACROSTIC 101.—Lights 2, 10, and 12 proved the most puzzling. Varach is right in saying that for 10 and 12 Potion and Overdose are better than Poison and Opiate. A healing draught cannot well be called a Poison; and, however strong the drugs in an Opiate may be, it will seldom be fatal unless an Overdose is taken. That M. Story cannot find Overdose in any dictionary seems strange.

CABBAGE.—For Light 7 you gave "Incombustious," instead of Asbestos.

MERTON.—You are right in preferring Smith to Silversmith, on the ground that the generic name is older than the specific, and that Hephaestus and Weland plied their hammers before Ephesus was built.

N. O. S.—Thanks for note. I decided against Crust after full consideration. (My word was "advancing," not "mature.")

J. L.—According to the Imperial Dictionary and the Popular Encyclopaedia (both published by Blackie & Son), Ammon was an Ethiopian deity originally. Lemière says that the ancients gave the name of Ethiopia to every country whose inhabitants are of a black colour. "A dark or subterraneous prison" is Johnson's definition of Dungeon.

J. DOMAN TURNER.—See my note above in reference to Lights 10 and 12.

ACROSTIC No. 100.—Correct: Mrs. Culley. One Light wrong: C. E. P., Mrs. Yarrow, Ruth, Coque, L. W. Phillips, and S. J. D. Two Lights wrong: Margaret.

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Stock Market Letter

The Stock Exchange, Thursday

THE 5 per cent. War Loan pays 5 per cent. on the money, allowing for inclusion of accrued interest; the Conversion 3½ per cent. and Funding 4 per cent. stocks yield 4½ per cent. at the current quotations. The War Loan interest is paid without deduction of tax at source. On both the other securities, the tax is taken off the dividend-cheques. The 5 per cent. War Loan is dated 1929-47, which means that the Government have the option of repaying it, at 100, any time between those years, inclusive. Because they fear that the loan may be redeemed at 100 in five years time, a good many investors will not look at the War Loan, lest, after buying it, they should find themselves called upon in the near future to accept a lower rate of interest, or some other stock that will bring in less income.

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO WAR STOCK

Roughly speaking, there is two thousand million pounds of the 5 per cent. War Loan in existence. To repay this at par would be indeed a colossal feat, one that is, in point of fact, hardly within the bounds of financial possibility. What the Government can, however, and possibly will, do, is to give holders of the stock an opportunity for converting into some other security. This happened, it may be recalled, in the case of several of the National War Bonds, the holders of which had the right to take Conversion stock instead of the cash, as the bonds fell due for repayment. The Government has the right to redeem the War Loan piecemeal, but this, again, is wildly improbable, and any step that is taken in connection with redemption will undoubtedly be applied to the full amount of the issue. Taking everything into account, the 5 per cent. War Loan continues to be one of the cheapest stocks in the House, and the present price carries interest due on June 1, which, incidentally, the price will be marked ex at the end of next month.

HOME RAILWAYS AND OTHERS

With most of the Home Railway stocks marked ex dividend to-day (Thursday), the market in them attracts attention from the investor who is not afraid of putting his money into undertakings that will certainly never run away, and which are always, so to speak, at his back door. The Deferred stocks of the Southern and North Eastern companies are not yet ex dividend. Underground incomes at 100 went ex at the beginning of the week. The market was waiting with a good deal of curiosity to hear what Lord Ashfield had to say at the meeting on Thursday.

United of Havana stock has so far flattered the expectations held out in connection with its probable progress, that a really substantial profit can be secured by those who got in what time the attractions were pointed out. Gossip has it that several new issues are pending in the railway markets, and, in addition to these, it is known that the public will have the opportunity for subscription to various Note issues in the near future. The new Bovril Notes are likely to be willingly taken by the company's own shareholders.

RUSSIA

So much irresponsible gossip has been indulged from time to time with reference to Russia and to Mexico that hesitation naturally arises in the acceptance of news from either of those countries, however good the source may seem to be. With this qualification then, I venture to repeat information given by a fellow-member of the Stock Exchange, who is in close touch with a well-known Russian group, one of whose members has lately returned from Moscow. According to this authority, a plan for re-opening, in practical fashion, trade relations between Great Britain and Russia is already drawn up and printed. It awaits a couple of signatures before it will be ready to come to England in order that it may be laid before the British Cabinet, upon whose consent the people concerned declare that they can count with confidence. That there is some diplomatic action afoot may be conjectured from the enquiries which we have seen recently on behalf of would-be buyers of Russian (so-called) securities. The situation grows more piquant in view of the probabilities forecast by the House talk which I quote.

RARE AND REFRESHING FRUIT

Why the insurance companies do not largely increase their dividends is a fruitful source of discussion among shareholders, and the usual Stock Exchange explanation is that, "one of these days," there will be juicy melons cut up for the benefit of proprietors. This is undoubtedly the reason why insurance shares stand at very high levels, judged by the returns obtainable on the basis of present dividends. Insurance did well last year. The Refuge Assurance, whose head office is in Manchester, increased its assets by 2½ million pounds, bringing up the total to 26½ million pounds: its premium income of 6½ million sterling was £300,000 up. The Wesleyan and General, of Birmingham, declares a reversionary bonus of 36s. per cent.; five years ago the bonus was only 20s. per cent. This Society has reduced its rate of interest from this week, from 6 per cent. to 5½ per cent. upon loans issued under its house-purchase scheme. The long-established Scottish Widows' Fund is raising its bonus declaration this year to 2 per cent., though with characteristic caution the directors emphasize the fact that this is due to exceptional circumstances.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

LEGATEE.—Buy the 5 per cent. War Loan. There is nothing really better, as I point out this week in my notes.

SHIPPING.—In the Stock Exchange they are looking for a repetition of last year's 7½ per cent. dividend on Cunards. The declaration usually comes in about May. A very decent speculative investment.

LATEX.—Why, it is difficult to decide; but many people seem to think that rubber shares are worth buying. This, in face of the continual dwindling in the price of the product, is anomalous: it may also be significant.

JANUS

THE LONDON & LANCASHIRE

HEAD OFFICES:
45 Dale Street, LIVERPOOL
155 Leadenhall Street, LONDON, E.C.3

ACCIDENT FIRE MARINE
INSURANCE COMPANY, LTD.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATION:
7 Chancery Lane, W.C.2

Company Meeting.**SELFRIFFE AND CO.**

The meeting of Selfridge and Co., Ltd., was held on the 29th ult. Mr. H. Gordon Selfridge (chairman and managing director) presided, and in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said:

Ladies and Gentlemen.—While the year just passed has contained its full share of those elements which make the doing of business difficult, it will in commercial history count as perhaps the best period since the abnormal year of 1919. It shows progress toward more normal or reasonable conditions. The individuals of nearly every country are endeavouring again to build their wealth. This is slow work, and is doubly difficult because of the fact that while their resources were being destroyed, a much greater loss lay in the awful destruction of life of those who could have helped so splendidly to reconstruct the nation's wealth. This, then, is where the world stands.

For eleven months of the past year we have been deprived of nearly half of the selling frontage in Oxford Street, and when one realizes that selling space is vital to this business, the loss of that floor area becomes more evident.

Notwithstanding that reduction, we are able to show—every-thing considered—one of the best years in the history of the house.

The Balance Sheet speaks for itself. The depreciation which we insist on taking is as great as ever—greater than on most years—and depreciation means keeping the capital in the business, because our rate of depreciation is far higher than is usually taken, and much greater than the items so depreciated are entitled to. On this point it is interesting to note that in depreciation, reserve fund, excess profits duty and corporation profits tax, this young business has in ten or twelve years written off over £1,200,000, and as profits grow larger, as they surely will, this rate of depreciation will be increased rather than reduced.

Our Wholesale Department has shown the best results in its history, and our group of branches have also done their best since they passed into our control.

The early addition of selling space, so badly needed, will help us to make of this store one which we have more nearly had in mind, and one which we feel certain the buying public will enthusiastically applaud.

We look forward, therefore, to this year of 1924 with a new optimism—a reasonable optimism consistent with after-war times and conditions.

The report was adopted.

AUSTRALIAN MUTUAL PROVIDENT SOCIETY

(A.M.P.) Estd. 1849 (A.M.P.)

The Largest Mutual Life Office in the Empire.
ASSETS £53,000,000 ANNUAL INCOME £7,800,000

**MODERATE PREMIUMS
LIBERAL CONDITIONS
WORLD-WIDE POLICIES
EVERY YEAR A BONUS YEAR**

Whole Life Policies, 20 years in force, show average increase of sum assured by Bonus exceeding 50 per cent.
Endowment Assurance Results also are unsurpassed.

London Office:
73-76 KING WILLIAM STREET, E.C.4.
W. C. FISHER, Manager for the United Kingdom.

'Saturday Review' Competitions

MAR. 8, 1924

Competitors must cut out and enclose this coupon

No. 3 B

The Story of Coal

THE MINER'S WORKING DAY and THE PAYMENT OF WAGES

Whether the working conditions in an industry may be considered good or bad depends, not only upon the rate of wages paid, but on the number of hours worked and the risk of unemployment.

The British miner now works seven hours a day underground, as compared with 8 hours worked by his foreign competitors.

In January, 1924, there were employed in and about the mines 76,000 more wage earners than in 1913. In a period of acute unemployment in general occupations, the coal miner has, therefore, been practically immune from this great evil.

In 1913 the daily output per man was 21 cwt. In 1922 it was 18 cwt. In 1923 (September quarter) it was 17½ cwt.—a reduction of 17 per cent. on 1913.

Had the output per person employed been the same in 1923 as it was in 1913 some 18 million more tons of coal would have been produced, with beneficial effects upon wages and prices.

Wages in the Coal Mining Industry are paid by results. The actual getter or hewer of the coal is paid on piecework, and the earnings of every wage-earner are determined by the results of the collective effort of all the workers.

Of the proceeds of the sale of coal, after paying for stores, timber and other working expenses, at least tenpence in every shilling goes to wages and never more than 2d. to profits. If the proceeds are insufficient to give the miners their guaranteed minimum wage, they receive more than tenpence. They may even receive more than the shilling—out of the owners' pockets.

The minimum wage should never be regarded as a measure of what the miners can earn. By collective effort it is within the power of the workers to increase output and thus reduce the cost of production per ton. Wages could thereby be increased and the price of coal to the consumer reduced.

Prosperity depends upon Private Enterprise and Cheap Coal.

If you are interested in "The Story of Coal," cut this advertisement out and file it. It will be followed by others telling other parts of the Story. Look out for them. They are being issued on behalf of the Colliery Owners of Great Britain by PHILIP GEE, 40, King Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2, from whom further information about the Coal Mining Industry can be obtained.

Prudential Assurance Company, LIMITED.

Chief Office:—HOLBORN BARS, LONDON, E.C.1

Summary of the Report presented at the Seventy-fifth Annual Meeting, held on March 6th, 1924

The Total Assets of the Company now amount to £158,450,229, as compared with £146,134,945 a year ago, i.e., an increase of £12,315,284.

The Total Income during 1923 was £33,699,266, as compared with £32,349,378 in 1922, i.e., an increase of £1,349,888.

ORDINARY BRANCH.—The number of policies issued during the year was 73,831, assuring the sum of £12,112,425, and producing a new annual premium income of £888,806. The premiums received were £9,728,511, being an increase of £112,921 over those for the year 1922.

The claims of the year amounted to £6,809,106. The number of deaths was 10,937. The number of endowment assurances matured was 44,468, the annual premium income of which was £333,123.

The number of policies, including annuities, in force at the end of the year was 1,122,666.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.—The premiums received during the year were £14,887,348, being an increase of £500,760.

The claims of the year amounted to £4,308,331. The total number of claims and surrenders was 574,582 on 676,496 policies, of which 81,883 were matured endowment assurances.

The number of free policies granted during the year to those policyholders of five years' standing and upwards who desired to discontinue their payments was 124,166, the number in force being 2,270,210. The number of free policies which became claims was 58,504.

The total number of policies in force in this Branch at the end of the year was 23,668,404. The average duration of the whole life premium paying policies in force exceeds 17 years.

GENERAL BRANCH.—The premiums received, after deduction of reinsurance, in respect of Fire, Sickness and Accident, Employers' Liability and Miscellaneous insurances, were £517,531, being an increase for the year of £34,780 over 1922. The claims of the year amounted to £195,243.

The premiums received under Sinking Fund policies were £42,767. The capital sum insured under these policies is £2,199,689.

The premiums received during the year on Marine Insurance business, after deduction of reinsurance, commission, discounts, brokerages and returns, amounted to £377,385. The claims which arose, not only in respect of the risks written in 1923, but also those written in 1922 and 1921, were £284,356.

In the Ordinary Branch the surplus shown is £2,428,648, including the sum of £177,186 brought forward from last year. Out of this surplus the Directors have added £500,000 to the Investments Reserve Fund, which stands as at December 31st, 1923, at £3,000,000. £1,576,022 has been set aside to provide a bonus to the participating policyholders, £173,474 has been transferred to Profit and Loss Account, and the balance of £179,152 has been carried forward. The above-stated amount of £1,576,022 is sufficient to provide a bonus of £2 per cent. on the original sums assured, and a bonus at that rate will be allocated to participating policies in the Ordinary Branch which were in force on the 31st December, 1923.

In the Industrial Branch the surplus shown is £2,534,013, including the sum of £123,069 brought forward from last year. Out of this Surplus the Directors have added £500,000 to the Investments Reserve Fund, which stands as at 31st December, 1923, at £2,250,000; £906,650 has been set aside to provide a bonus to policyholders; £751,526 has been transferred to Profit and Loss Account; £227,642 has been reserved for Bonus to the members of the Outdoor Staff, and the balance of £148,195 has been carried forward.

In accordance with the method announced last year, a contingent reversionary bonus (vesting after 15 years) of 25s. per cent. on the sum assured, has been added to all policies which were issued during the year 1923 and which were in force on December 31st last. The bonus will be calculated on the amount payable on a claim arising by death or maturity provided the policy has then been 15 years in force. In addition, these policies on becoming claims after they have been not less than 5 years and under 15 years in force will share in any interim bonus which may be declared.

This declaration of bonus as a reversionary addition to the sum assured marks a further and important stage in the development of Industrial Assurance.

In respect of all policies issued before January 1st, 1923, which are entitled to participate under the bonus distribution scheme, on which 10 years' premiums have been paid and which become claims by death or maturity of endowment between March 7th, 1924, and March 7th, 1929, both dates inclusive, a bonus addition will be made as follows:—

Premiums paid for	Amount of Claim.* increased by per cent.
10 Years and less than 20 years ...	£5 0s.
20 " " " 30 "	£7 10s.
30 " " " 40 "	£10 0s.
40 " " " 50 "	£15 0s.
50 " " " 55 "	£20 0s.
55 " " " 60 "	£30 0s.
60 " " upwards	£40 0s.

These bonuses are inclusive of, and not in addition to, those declared in March, 1923, which were guaranteed for three years to March 4th, 1926. The bonuses now declared are guaranteed for a period of five years to 7th March, 1929.

The Company's profit-sharing scheme provides that after payment of a fixed dividend to the holders of fully-paid shares, any surplus profit shall be divided into six equal parts: one part being retained by such shareholders, one distributed among the outdoor staff of the Company and the remaining four parts being allotted by way of bonus to the policyholders of the Industrial Branch.

The sum which has already been allotted under this scheme by way of bonus to the Industrial Branch policyholders and outdoor staff amounts to £4,900,212 as follows:

Year.	Outdoor Staff. [†]	Policy- holders. [†]
From March, 1908, to March, 1923	£805,920	£2,960,000
March, 1924	227,642	966,650
		£3,866,650
	£1,033,562	

The important changes which have been effected during recent years in the organisation of the work of the Industrial Branch both at Chief Office and among the Superintendency and Agency Staff have resulted in a progressive decrease in the rate of expenditure in this branch, as shown in the following table:—

Year.	40.50 per cent. of Total Premiums received.
1920	40.50
1921	36.92
1922	32.12
1923	29.74

As foreshadowed last year, in consequence of this reduction in the expense ratio, it has been found possible to issue a new Industrial Branch prospectus as from January 1st, 1924. The new range of tables provides simpler forms of contract with increased benefits to the assured.

The Industrial Assurance Act, 1923, which came into general operation on January 1st, 1924, increases the limits of the amount which may be assured up to age 10 on the lives of children in Great Britain. The full amounts allowed by the Act are assured by the new tables without increase in premium.

The four Prudential Approved Societies have during the year paid to or on behalf of their members benefits amounting approximately to £3,261,700, making a total of over £21,458,700 since National Insurance was introduced. Included in the amount paid during the year is a sum of £242,723 expended on additional (non-cash) Benefits granted as a result of the first valuation of the Societies and made up as follows:—Dental Treatment £113,582, Hospital and Convalescent Home Treatment £120,940, Medical and Surgical Appliances £1,382, Optical Treatment £3,704, and Nursing £3,115. The number of persons admitted to membership of the Societies during the year was 315,049, of whom 145,106 were men and 169,943 women.

Messrs. Deloitte, Plender, Griffiths & Co. have examined the securities, and their certificate is appended to the balance sheets.

A. C. THOMPSON, *Chairman*.
EDGAR HORNE, } *Directors*.
JAMES MOON,
J. BURN,

General Manager and Actuary.

G. E. MAY, *Secretary*.

The full Report and Balance Sheet can be obtained upon application.

* These increases do not necessarily apply to policies in the Irish Free State, owing to the deduction on account of Income Tax, as mentioned hereafter.

† An arrangement has recently been made with the Inland Revenue Authorities whereby the Outdoor Staff's share of the Profits is no longer taxed in the hands of the Company but in the hands of the recipients. By the Finance Act, 1923, the Policyholders' share of the profits is not subject to income tax except in respect of Irish business (to which the 1923 Act does not apply). Allowance has been made for these two changes in the method of taxation in ascertaining the proportions payable to the respective groups of participants in the profit-sharing scheme.

Company Meeting.**UNDERGROUND RAILWAYS**

The Annual Meeting of the Proprietors of the Underground Railways was held on the 6th inst. at the Caxton Hall.

The Chairman (the Right Hon. Lord Ashfield) said:—

In presenting to you the Report and Accounts of your Company for the past year, I am not proposing to traverse once more the ground which I covered in the recent speech to the shareholders of the principal operating companies, which dealt at some length with the traffic situation that has arisen in London. Instead, I am proposing to follow the practice of last year and to ask the Secretary to send to each of you a copy of what I then said. Events have, however, moved so quickly that there is one thing I may add. The Prime Minister has promised the House of Commons that a Bill to deal with the present traffic situation shall be introduced in Parliament immediately.

The total number of passengers carried was 1,796 millions, or 204 millions more than in the preceding year, an increase of 13 per cent. It is significant that all transport undertakings in Greater London, whether privately or municipally owned, constantly tend to be unremunerative. If I take the capital invested in all the Underground Railways, I find that in the years subsequent to the completion of electrification, and prior to the war, the average return ranged from 1.9 to 2.5 per cent., and in the few years subsequent to the war, in spite of an enormous development in the volume of traffic carried, from 3.2 to 3.7 per cent. Looked at from the narrower but more pertinent point of view of the ordinary capital only, the pre-war range of return was from .7 to 1.2 per cent., and the post-war range of return from 2.4 to 3.4 per cent. The total capital invested in London transport of all forms is approximately £116 millions, of which £84 millions, or 72 per cent., represents the railway share, so that you may realize what a burden the scanty return on the railway capital is.

Your income from investments amounts in round figures to £840,000, or £42,000 less than it was a year ago. This is mainly attributable to the sale of certain securities to repay the 6 per cent. Three Year Secured Notes. The full loss of income on this account was £51,000. There was also a loss of almost £4,000 due to the failure of the London and Suburban Traction Co. to pay the full dividend on its 5 per cent. Cumulative Preference Shares. This in turn was due to the failure of the tramways to hold their traffics in the face of growing omnibus competition. While they gave an increased service of 700,000 car miles in an endeavour to retain and augment the passengers, they failed by three millions to reach the number which they had in 1922. To set against these losses it is pleasing to record that the Metropolitan District Railway Company, by paying a half per cent. more on its ordinary capital, contributed an additional £9,000 to your income, while the London General Omnibus Company contributed £4,000 more, this being the difference between 8½ per cent. free of tax paid in 1922 and 9 per cent. free of tax paid in 1923.

Against the loss of income is also to be set the reduction in the interest charge on the 6 per cent. Three Year Secured Notes, amounting in this broken year to £28,000, but in a full year to £42,000.

There has been a reduction in the net sum paid in general interest of £15,000, which is largely explained by the reduction in the amount of the temporary loans outstanding of £310,000. The depreciation of the pound sterling has increased the loss on exchange by £16,000, and altogether £41,000 must be spent in transmitting interest and dividends to New York for payment there in accordance with the terms of issue. No amount has been set aside for special reserve for the equalization of interest on the First Cumulative Income Debenture Stock and Income Bonds. This special reserve stands at £80,000, and is sufficient for the purpose. After paying the full interest for the year on the 6 per cent. Income Bonds, as against 5 per cent. in the preceding year, the amount carried forward is £96,000, or £47,000 more than the amount brought in. The position of your Company is strengthened to this extent.

As the capital of your Company is at present constituted there is not the slightest chance of its being substantially increased. There is, therefore, a very definite obstacle to your taking any greater interest in London transport, even though it should prove remunerative to you not only in itself, but also—and this is the more important phase—in rendering more remunerative to you the large interests you already have.

Let me now summarize the financial situation of your Company as I see it. There are three separate but related questions. How to increase the capital so as to provide cash for the purchase of further securities of the operating companies? How to reduce the capital charges in respect of the fixed interest stocks and bonds which you have already issued? How to convert into some more satisfactory form of share the 1s. "A" shares? To find the right answers is a task of some complexity, but there is at least one condition which, until it is satisfied, precludes all answers, so far as I can see. Until the dollar value of the pound sterling reaches parity any reconstruction of capital is likely to be expensive, and therefore prohibitive. While, therefore, your directors continue to search for a solution, I cannot hold out any prospect of one being found that will fully meet the case. It may be that some minor adjustments may be secured, but that is all.

The proceedings then terminated.

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Particulars sent post free on application.

FURNITURE—Private Sale.

By direction of the Receiver, the remaining portion of goods must be disposed of, regardless of cost, manufactured for West End Residential Club, through financial difficulties. These goods have never been used, in perfect condition, warehoused over four years, to be sold at half original cost. Manufactured from guaranteed timber. Goods purchased can remain stored free; any items separated. Below are a few of the lots:—Thirty-five loose-cushion beautifully upholstered easy chairs in tapestry, silk damask, and art linens, 30s. 6d. each; Chesterfield settees to match, four guineas each; 25 luxuriously upholstered lounge easy chairs, covered real hide leather, all spring seats and backs, £6 10s. each; 25 Chesterfields to match, equally cheap; 75 bedroom suites, waxed oak, mahogany, Sheraton, Jacobean, white enamel, etc., complete with wardrobes, £8 17s. 6d. to 350 guineas; 20 solid mahogany bedsteads, full size, £23 7s. 6d. each; 30 oak beds and springs, 32s. 6d. each; dining tables, sideboards, oval mirrors, two pianos, also Humber Saloon Car, new condition, 15.9 h.p., etc. We invite inspection of this gigantic collection. Goods packed for country free. On view.

EDWARDES' FURNITURE DEPOSITORY

35 to 37, Battersea-rise, Clapham Junction, S.W.11. Hours 9 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. Close Weds. 1 o'clock. Five minutes Clapham Common and Clapham Junction Stations, eight minutes Waterloo and Victoria Stations. Buses 19, 37, 39, 49 pass door.

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MARCH

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Now on Sale, Price 2/-

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Company Meeting

**SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND
LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY**
INCREASED NEW BUSINESS

QUINQUENNIAL RESULTS.

The Hundred and Tenth Annual General Court of the Scottish Widows' Fund Life Assurance Society was held yesterday in the society's head office, Edinburgh, Mr. H. E. Richardson, W.S. (chairman of the ordinary court of directors), presiding.

In moving the adoption of the report and accounts, the Chairman said: I shall mention first the new business, which I am glad to say largely exceeds that of the previous year. In 1923 we issued new policies for the gross sum assured of £2,493,000, of which £90,000 was re-assured, leaving a net new business of £2,403,000. This exceeds the previous year's net total by about £300,000, and we have no doubt that the excess would have been greater had not an election greatly disturbed the business of the country in general at the end of the year. During the past five years the new business has varied considerably, according to general business conditions, but you will be interested to know that the total for the quinquennium is not only much greater than that of the previous period, which was one of war, but also greater than that of any previous five years in our history. The death claims constitute a very important factor in the results of our business, and I am glad to say that we have again had a very favourable experience. The life premium income was £1,611,000, or over £13,000 more than in 1922. The interest income also shows an increase, and for the first time exceeds one million sterling net. The gross rate of interest, namely, £5 4s. 5d. per cent., though satisfactory, is somewhat less than in the previous year. Owing, however, to the reduction in the rate of income tax, the net rate of interest, namely, £4 7s. 11d. per cent., is slightly higher than that obtained in the previous year.

THE YEAR'S INCOME.

The total income of the year was £2,746,000 and the total outgo £2,074,000, showing a surplus of income over outgo amounting to £672,000, which amount has been added to our funds. With the exception of one previous year, when the amount was but slightly greater, this is the largest amount ever added to our funds in a single year. Such a substantial addition to our funds is highly gratifying, as pointing to an expansion of our operations and resources. As compared with the corresponding figures of five years ago, the annual premium income is now greater, in round figures, by £140,000, and the net annual interest income by £200,000, and the funds by about two millions sterling.

In taking stock of our liabilities under our life assurance contracts, with the exception of some minor classes that have been specially dealt with, we have again used the combined OM and OM (5) tables, the most modern standard available. The valuation has been made according to the pure premium method—that is to say, only the theoretical risk premiums have been valued, and we have reserved as a provision for future expenses and profits the whole of the margin between those theoretical premiums and the actual premiums payable; and in the case of the non-profit policies, where the natural margin is but narrow, a special reserve has been made to bring the margin up to 10 per cent. of the office premiums. The rate of interest adopted in the valuation, both for assurances and annuities, is, as previously, 3 per cent., that is, it is assumed that the funds and premiums as received will earn 3 per cent. net, the margin between that rate and the rate actually earned forming one of the provisions made for the maintenance of future bonuses.

On the other side of the account we have the life assurance and annuity funds of over 24 millions. The assets making up these funds have been specially considered by a committee of the directors, and their report will, I am sure, be regarded as completely satisfactory. For the purposes of the investigation, the Stock Exchange investments have been taken at the prices at which they stood on the books at December 31 last, viz., at or under cost price. We have fortunately not to face any question of depreciation on this occasion. There have been many ups and downs in values during the past five years, and we shall doubtless have a similar experience during the current quinquennium. Prices on December 31 last, which were neither the best nor the worst of the quinquennium, were on the whole favourable, and I am glad to say that the aggregate market value of our securities considerably exceeded the value in our books.

BONUS OF £2 PER CENT.

The directors have most carefully considered the question of the rate of bonus to be declared for the past five years, particularly with the desire to give some special rate on this occasion having regard to the disturbance of bonuses caused by the war. In order to preserve and protect the position of the holders of policies under which payments fell to be made during the past

quinquennium, the directors, in pursuance of special powers which they sought and obtained from Parliament, allotted special intermediate bonuses in addition to those which would ordinarily have been payable in such cases. These special intermediate bonuses have partially absorbed the special reserve of £700,000 which was made in calculating the liabilities five years ago. Having regard to the position in which the society now stands, we feel that the balance of this reserve may now be applied to provide an addition to the ordinary rate of vested bonus to be allotted for the past five years to the participating policies remaining in force. This enables the directors to declare a bonus at the exceptional rate of £2 per cent. for each premium paid during the quinquennium, and calculated on the compound reversionary bonus principle, that is, on the existing bonus additions as well as on the original sums assured. This very high rate of allotment cannot fail to be gratifying to the members, but it is important to observe that it is declared in exceptional circumstances, and therefore is not one which can be expected to be our normal rate of bonus. We do, however, feel that in the absence of any unforeseen contingencies such as would affect offices in general, we are warranted in hoping that we may be able in the future to declare bonuses somewhat higher than our already high pre-war rate of 3½ per cent. per annum; and for this reason we have fixed for the present the rate of contingent intermediate bonus to be allotted in respect of policies falling in before the next investigation at the increased rate of 3½ per cent. per annum, calculated on sums assured and vested bonus additions.

In conclusion, I may say that the result of the quinquennial investigation into the state of the society's affairs has confirmed the directors in their conviction of its continued vitality and prosperity, and it is with confidence they expect that the members will receive their report as eminently satisfactory. Never before was the society in a stronger position than it occupies to-day. At the commencement of a fresh quinquennial period, with funds totalling over twenty-four millions, an annual income of over two and a half millions, a favourable rate of mortality, and a low rate of expense, the society gives renewed evidence of the prudence of its policy and the undoubted security it affords to its policy-holders.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

The retiring directors were re-elected, a vote of thanks was accorded to the directors and office-bearers, and the proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

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REFUGE ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

Chief Office: OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER.

EXTRACT FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1923.

ORDINARY BRANCH.—In this Branch the number of POLICIES ISSUED was 41,478, assuring £4,769,542 0s. 0d., at a yearly renewal premium of income of £333,920 17s. 0d., the single premiums amounting to £20,893 13s. 9d. The PREMIUM INCOME was £2,745,831 9s. 10d., being an increase of £117,419 3s. 10d. over the previous year. The CLAIMS PAID amounted to £1,244,542 4s. 3d., including £665,171 11s. 6d. paid to living policy-holders under matured endowment assurances.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.—In this Branch the PREMIUM INCOME amounted to £3,686,842 18s. 3d., being an increase of £193,265 3s. 7d. over the previous year. The CLAIMS PAID amounted to £1,482,290 19s. 3d. These figures include the corresponding items in the Sickness Assurance Account.

The TOTAL PREMIUM INCOME for the year amounted to £6,432,674 8s. 1d., being an increase of £310,684 7s. 5d. over the previous year. The CLAIMS PAID in the year amounted to £2,726,833 3s. 5d. and the total paid in claims since the establishment of the Company is now £40,285,608 7s. 0d.

The TOTAL ASSETS of the Company now amount to £26,589,083 11s. 10d., being an increase during the year of £2,640,686 13s. 4d.

GENERAL BALANCE SHEET OF THE REFUGE ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1923.

LIABILITIES.		£ s. d.	ASSETS (Continued).		£ s. d.
Shareholders' Capital, paid up	...	300,000 0 0	Indian and Colonial Government Securities	...	1,792,624 9 6
Ordinary Branch Assurance Fund	...	18,201,036 14 2	Do. Provincial do.	...	113,285 13 9
Ordinary Branch Investments Reserve Fund	...	625,000 0 0	Do. Municipal do.	...	530,303 4 6
Industrial Branch Assurance Fund	...	6,803,925 4 3	Foreign Government Securities	...	858,342 12 2
Industrial Branch Investments Reserve Fund	...	275,000 0 0	Do. Provincial do.	...	150,590 8 4
Staff Pension Fund	...	210,000 0 0	Do. Municipal do.	...	255,656 13 4
Provision for Income Tax on War Stock Interest and for Corporation Profits Tax	...	103,731 6 10	Railway and other Debentures and Debenture Stocks—Home and Foreign	...	5,512,635 1 1
Claims admitted or intimated but not paid	...	70,300 6 7	Railway and other Preference and Guaranteed Stocks	...	1,058,076 1 9
		£26,589,083 11 10	Do. and other Ordinary Stocks	...	299,961 1 5
Mortgages on Property within the United Kingdom	...	2,683,577 5 2	Rent Charges	...	45,686 15 6
Mortgages on Property out of the United Kingdom	...	1,130 0 0	Frehold Ground Rents	...	7,065 12 3
Loans on Parochial and other Public Rates	...	1,048,463 17 1	House and Office Property	...	560,428 2 8
Do. Reversions	...	11,372 19 9	Agents' Balances	...	49,654 6 7
Do. Stocks and Shares	...	9,500 0 0	Outstanding Premiums	...	£310,375 6 5
Do. Company's Policies within their Surrender Values	...	1,425,595 0 0	Less Abatement to provide, inter alia, for Loss of Revenue	...	£120,260 0 3
INVESTMENTS:—					190,106 6 2
Deposit with the High Court (£70,000 3 <i>½</i> per cent. Conversion Loan)	...	44,590 0 0	Do. Interest, Dividends, and Rents (less Income Tax)	...	13,495 8 3
Deposit with the Supreme Court in Southern Ireland (£20,000 3 <i>½</i> p.c. Conversion Loan)	...	20,000 0 0	Interest accrued but not payable (less Income Tax)	...	263,669 1 7
British Government Securities	...	8,925,916 17 7	CASH:—		
Municipal and County Securities, United Kingdom	...	305,193 7 1	On Deposit	...	152,500 0 0
			In hand and on Current Account	...	259,663 6 11
					£26,589,083 11 10

PHILIP SMITH,
JAMES S. PROCTOR,

Managing Directors.

JAMES S. PROCTOR, Chairman.

JNO. W. MOSS, Secretary.

J. PROCTOR GREEN,
W. H. ALDCROFT, F.I.A.,

General Managers.

JNO. T. SHUTT,

J. WILCOCK HOLGATE,

Directors.

We report that we have audited the foregoing Balance Sheet and have obtained all the information and explanations we have required. In our opinion the said Balance Sheet is properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Company's affairs according to the best of our information and the explanations given to us and as shown by the Books of the Company.

We have examined the Cash transactions (Receipts and Payments) affecting the Accounts of the Company's Assets and Investments for the year ending 31st December 1923, and we find the same in good order and properly vouched. We have also examined the Deeds and other securities representing the Assets and Investments stated in the foregoing Balance Sheet and we certify that they remained in the Company's possession and safe custody on the 31st December, 1923.

WALTON, WATTS & CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

BRITANNIC ASSURANCE COMPANY LTD.

(ESTABLISHED 1866)

Chief Offices: Broad St. Corner, Birmingham.

Chief London Office: 44 and 46 Kingsway, W.C.2

Extracts from the DIRECTORS' REPORT for the Year 1923.

TOTAL PREMIUM INCOME amounted to £2,548,531.

CLAIMS PAID during the year amounted to £987,878, including £310,346 paid under Maturing Policies.

TOTAL CLAIMS PAID.—The total amount paid in Claims up to 31st December, 1923, was £17,843,249

ORDINARY BRANCH.—The Premium Income amounted to £614,228, showing an increase of £61,746 over the previous year.

The number of Policies issued in this Branch was 11,856, assuring (after deduction of Reassurances) the sum of £1,901,802.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.—The Premium Income amounted to £1,932,036, showing an increase of £81,469 over the previous year.

TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.—The Gross Income amounted to £2,987,997, showing an Increase of £201,054 over the Gross Income of the previous year. The Total Outgo amounted to £1,974,902, leaving a Balance of Income over Expenditure on the year's accounts of £1,013,095.

TOTAL FUNDS.—The Total Funds now amount to £8,491,743.

The ANNUAL VALUATION of the Company's business has been made by the Actuary. After making full provision for all policy liabilities, the resulting surplus is £273,786.

Ordinary Branch Policies in the immediate Participating class will receive a Reversionary Bonus at the increased rate of 36/- per cent. for the year.

J. MURRAY LAING, F.I.A., F.F.A.,
Secretary and Actuary.

JNO. A. JEFFERSON, F.I.A.,
Chairman.